AUG 9 1938

THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XVI. No. 388 (New Series) SATURDAY, JULY 30, 1938 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

LORD RUNCIMAN goes to Prague as an independent mediator. We cannot imagine a more difficult or responsible mission. For the attitude which Lord Runciman adopts in Prague, his report and his advice, cannot fail to affect the political relations between Berlin and London—which are the reality of the Central European situation. The technical problem of the minority rights of the Sudeten Germans are complex and Lord Runciman will have to consider in detail the questions (discussed in our leading article this week) whether the Czech proposals meet all legitimate German grievances and whether Henlein's proposals are conceivably compatible with the existence of an independent Czechoslovakia. Lord Runciman will no doubt also examine fully the possibilities of a frontier revision designed to relieve the Czechs of the burden of a Nazi minority. But behind such technical discussions he will know that the real problem is whether Hitler, who is reported to be still maintaining a large army on the Austrian-Czech frontier, can be persuaded that it is too dangerous to attempt to treat Czechoslovakia as he has treated Austria. If Hitler calls off violence the minority problem will not prove at all insoluble. At the moment the omens are bad. Hitler sends envoys to Britain and talks of an air pact while German propaganda intensifies against the Czechs. The situation is unpleasantly reminiscent of the period of conversations that preceded the rape of Austria.

Mr. Chamberlain's Foreign Policy

The Government's policy was defended in the Commons on Tuesday with the familiar arguments, compounded mainly of evasion and unfounded optimism. The shop-soiled fetish of Non-Intervention was paraded again, and again the unwarranted assumption was made that this had saved us from a general war. The Prime Minister even had the assurance to say that the Italian Government had kept "full faith" with us in collaboration on the Non-Intervention Committee. Later in the debate the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs denied that Italian troops have recently landed in large numbers at Vinaroz; according to his information, it was 5,000 or 6,000 Spanish troops who had come from the Balearics. Dr. Summerskill offered him proof to the contrary from the Foreign Minister in Barcelona; but he politely left it as a "difference of opinion." The information of Mr. Butler and his friends, of course, may be right; but it has all too frequently been wrong on similar matters in the past. How many times in these two years have the British Government not scouted reports of Italian intervention in Spain—

only to be confounded presently out of Mussolini's own mouth. As for the Far East, Mr. Chamberlain explained in a few sentences the inadequate reasons for which he had refused a loan to China; but he did hold out some hopes of other means of assistance which were now being considered. Meanwhile in China as in Spain, the popular forces are holding the Fascists advance. In Spain indeed, the Government forces have made a substantial advance.

Britain's War Debt

Lord Samuel's useful reminder that public opinion in the United States is far from accepting the 1931 moratorium as a final solution of the war debt problem, and that Britain's unliquidated obligations are a thorn in the flesh of good Anglo-American relations, moved the Government to re-define its attitude in this issue. Earl Stanhope told the House of Lords that the British Government had never considered the question to be closed, and would be ready for discussions "when likely to produce results of value." Any settlement, he suggested, must take into account the magnitude of Britain's rearmament burden, the absence of receipts from her debtors on reparation and war account, the balance of trade and the stability of the exchanges. It may well be that negotiations cannot fruitfully be reopened until after the next Presidential election; but resumed they will have to be if this country is not to figure in American eyes as a wilful defaulter. At the end of the war Britain owed America about £800,000,000. Lord Baldwin undertook to repay (including both principal and interest) the preposterous sum of £2,700,000,000. Actually we have paid off £400,000,000. The best way to assess Britain's future capacity to pay might be to see how large a British Government loan could be successfully floated at, say, 3½ per cent. in the New York market—the proceeds in dollars being turned over to the American Treasury.

Anglo-American Trade

Meanwhile advices from Washington suggest that, despite Mr. Chamberlain's optimism, the Anglo-American trade talks are once more encountering heavy weather. The Prime Minister on Tuesday admitted that the negotiators had reached "instances which offer exceptional difficulties," but he hoped for an early "agreed conclusion." Actually it appears that agreement has been virtually reached for modest reciprocal tariff reductions applicable to a variety of industrial products, but that the British negotiators cannot see how to meet America's demands for lower duties for agricultural products without protests from the Dominions that the advantages to them of the Ottawa Agreements are being whittled away. Canada is apparently willing to make sacrifices of Imperial preference in the hope of compensating gains from a new trade treaty between herself and the United States; but not so Australia or New Zealand, who have less scope for trade expansion in the American and more to lose in the British market. The *impasse* will not be easy to overcome.

The Jews in Italy

Italy is now preparing, it seems, to follow the example of Germany in persecuting the Jews. A preliminary press campaign in favour of "racial purity" has been followed by a pronouncement by Signor Starace, secretary of the Fascist Party, who threatens drastic measures against "all forms of hybridism and contamination." The Jews in every country, we are told, with their money and their men, are the "general staff of anti-Fascism," and in Italy as elsewhere "they have considered themselves as a race different from and superior to the others." This is nonsense. As Dr. Cecil Roth, the learned Jewish historian, pointed out in a letter to the *Times* the other day, the process of assimilation has been going on perpetually in Italy for the past twenty centuries, and "there can be very few," he adds, "among the urban population of the country at least, in whose veins there is no Jewish blood." If that is so, it will scarcely be possible to hunt out "non-Aryans" with the thoroughness the Nazis have shown. But it is estimated that there are some 50,000 Jews in Italy, a quarter of them in Rome, who acknowledge their race and practise their religion, and it may go hard with them. There are rumours that amongst the penalties in store for them is expulsion from the Fascist Party and corporations and from the universities. We can only hope that this anti-Semitic ideology—from which Italy has hitherto been commendably free—is not going to develop into the foul thing it has become in Germany.

An Absurd Law

The Select Committee of the House of Commons has not yet got to the bottom of the Sandys case, and its report, therefore, will not be presented before the rising of Parliament. The public will wait without any great impatience for the elucidation of the mystery. Meanwhile we have been treated to another exhibition of the absurdity of the Official Secrets Acts. Last Monday a turf adviser was fined £1 in the Clerkenwell Police Court for giving a false name to the keeper of an accommodation address. He gave his correct address, and the assumed name was not given for any criminal purpose—the man was, in fact, going to register it as a business name. No wonder one magistrate asked what all this fuss was about, and another expressed his astonishment at the ingenuity of the charge. Nevertheless, an offence had been committed under Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act of 1920, and counsel for the prosecution duly produced the fiat of the Attorney-General and obtained a conviction. Official Secrets! It is indeed ludicrous—and it was assuredly never contemplated by Members of Parliament—that a law aimed at spies and treason-mongers should be used to bludgeon a bookmaker. But if we can laugh at this case, there are other aspects of the Acts—and in particular their application to journalists—which involve a grave infraction of the rights and duties of the citizen.

London and Land Values

The London County Council has decided to promote legislation which will give it power to tax site-values within its administrative area, including the City of London. The L.C.C. attempted to secure this power in 1901; but it was then refused, as it probably would be again if the Bill were to come before the present Parliament. The proposal, which was adopted by a very large majority—83 to 44—is for a rate of 2*s.* in the pound, derated land to be included; and the estimated yield is about £3 millions a year. Mr. Charles Latham, in introducing the proposal, stressed the unfairness of the existing system of local rates, especially in view of the continuous accretion of new charges. He took his stand on the large benefits derived by the owners of land from schemes of public development, and the great disparity between the rates

charged on the owners of land and the sums paid by the Council for land acquired for public purposes. The opposition argued that existing rates were not so unfair as was made out, and that the change, if made at all, ought to be simultaneous over the whole country. But no one could deny that derating has made the incidence of the rates that remain even less fair than it was, or that the growth of population in Greater London, at the county's expense, is making them unfairer still, for the L.C.C. has to provide many services for people who live outside its area, even if they work or shop or amuse themselves within it.

Coal Exports

The colliery owners and the miners—old enemies, but concerned in common about the position and prospects of the coal industry—have put forward a demand for a levy on all coal produced, the proceeds to be applied as a subsidy to the export trade. Coal exports were well under 35 million tons in 1936 and just over 40 millions in 1937, as against 73 millions in the record year, 1913. Efforts to raise exports by special trade agreements with Scandinavian and other countries have not achieved much, for the effect has been largely to direct Polish and other competition into markets in which British coal cannot secure a preferential position. The industry now wants a system of export subsidies, for which home consumers, including the coal-using industries, will have to pay. Undoubtedly coal, like other British industries, has to face subsidised foreign competition; but if the consumer is to pay in this case, why not in others? At all events, the consumer can reasonably claim that, if exports are to be sold below cost at his expense, the industry ought to be brought under effective public control, so as to eliminate all waste and all possibility of excessive profits. So far the Government has not announced its policy in reply to the joint request; but it has promised sympathetic consideration, and, in view of what has happened in the case of steel, coal consumers had better be on the look-out. Besides, this business of subsidies and counter-subsidies is an exceedingly dangerous game.

Coroners' Courts

The question of the ill-defined and in some respects anomalous functions exercised by coroners' courts has been revived by proceedings at several recent inquests. In one case a motorist was committed by coroner's warrant for trial at Assizes on a charge of manslaughter, although he had been tried and acquitted by a magistrate's court for this alleged road offence. In another instance the death of a pedestrian was brought in as "accidental," although the motorist involved had previously been sentenced to gaol for dangerous driving. The moral in these cases is surely that inquests and criminal proceedings should not go on *pari passu*, and that, when a prosecution has been initiated, the inquest should be adjourned *sine die*; otherwise the result may be farcical. A different problem, however, arises from an inquest held last week in Suffolk, at which the coroner in effect directed the jury to bring in a verdict of "murder," and proceeded—quite judicially, be it said—to sum up the evidence bearing on the opportunities and motives affecting four witnesses, none of whom were on trial, represented by counsel, or in a position to reply to the coroner's observations. The purpose of an inquest is to ascertain the cause of death. This done, it would be fairer to all concerned if, in cases where a deceased is found to have died by another's hand, the responsibility for naming and prosecuting the guilty party were left to the police and the Public Prosecutor without the quite unneeded guidance of a coroner's jury or an inquisition into problematic guilt by an official who is, at best, an unhappy hybrid between judge and prosecuting counsel.

Prison Reform

Sir Samuel Hoare's account of his achievements and plans for prison reform contained the best news we have heard for many a long day. We must examine the details of Sir Samuel Hoare's proposals on another occasion. For the moment we must be content to congratulate him on the results of the "earning system" for prisoners—we have been a long time in appreciating its value, but now that it has begun it is working wonders—and on his schemes—again long planned, but waiting someone with the energy to put them through—to get rid of Holloway as a woman's prison, to start a more suitable prison in the country for women, to pull down that out-of-date horror, Pentonville, and arrange for the L.C.C. to use the site for housing purposes. None of these things is very difficult to do, but we are grateful to Sir Samuel Hoare for showing that, even during a period of National Government and war threat, Britain need not be in domestic affairs a stagnant backwater.

Frances Warwick

Lady Warwick was a woman of considerable courage, as well as of great beauty. She had an all inclusive kindliness, and a passion for helping people and for preventing cruelty. She loved birds and animals and flowers as well as men, and with much of the same feeling; she hated to see any of them unhappy or stunted in growth. Her Socialism was essentially humanitarian, like Robert Blatchford's; and it was appropriate that he played an important part in her conversion. That conversion deeply shocked "Society," and not least King Edward VII; but Lady Warwick never showed the smallest disposition to water down her faith. If her old friends chose to cut her, well and good; if not, she would talk Socialism to them. For many years she made Easton Lodge—her own inheritance from the Maynards—the centre for all sorts of Labour activity. She wanted it to become a Labour College, and the scheme nearly went through—to be dropped for lack of funds on the morrow of the General Strike. Both before and after that disappointment, all sorts of people gathered at Easton Lodge, from Left Wingers planning United Fronts to the most orthodox leaders from Transport House. They were all made welcome; and so were local Labour workers from all over Essex. Besides, there were plays in Lady Warwick's barn theatre, and great days when H. G. Wells was her tenant next door at Easton Glebe. Whatever becomes of Easton Lodge now, more than one generation of Socialists will have cause to hold memorable days spent there in doing and talking, and the ever-sympathetic and humane presence of its owner.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 *Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.*1.
POSTAGE on this issue is : Inland, 1*d. ; Foreign,* 1½*d. ; Canada,* 1*d.*

THE CZECH PUZZLE

ONE of Lord Palmerston's most celebrated *mots* referred to the incomprehensibility of the Schleswig-Holstein question, which was ably exploited by Prussia in 1864. The Sudeten German problem, which may now at any moment be used to plunge all Europe into war, is unfortunately no less intricate. It may therefore be valuable to analyse the remedies hitherto proposed by the Czechoslovak Government in order to show what they practically mean.

Those who are familiar with Czechoslovak administration are aware that, national or racial quarrels apart, it has been thoroughly over-centralised since the Local Government law of 1927; and, as a corollary, it has laid too much emphasis upon the use of Czech or Slovak, to the detriment of those whose first language is German or Hungarian.

In pre-war Austria there was a complicated administrative system characterised by its so-called *Doppelgeleisigkeit*. The communes, district assemblies and provincial diets were all wholly elective, though the franchise in each case was selective and not democratic, since social status was variously weighted. These bodies representing the localities had wide administrative powers, and the Emperor only directly interfered with their activities in that he nominated a member of each provincial diet to act as its president (*Landeshauptmann*, or in Bohemia *Oberstlandmarschall*). On the other hand, the Imperial Government was directly represented in each province by a *Statthalter* (or Landespräsident) with an administrative staff. As the Emperor's representative the *Statthalter* had the last word, but in general some sort of balance was preserved between him and the *Landeshauptmann* who indirectly represented the people; and this "double-rails" system was regarded by the supporters of the *ancien régime* as a satisfactory working compromise.

With the rise of Czechoslovakia the franchise for all local elections became uniform and universal, and after several years of disputes and discussion the Local Government reform of 1927 was passed. This put an end to *Doppelgeleisigkeit* by amalgamating the representatives of the central Government directly with the representatives of the localities. Not in the municipal bodies, but in the district assemblies and provincial diets, a third of the members were henceforth nominated in Prague. Further, the powers of the provincial diets, which had exercised wide functions in the old Austrian days, were very much circumscribed. The effect of the law of 1927 was undoubtedly to over-centralise, and since the central Government tended to nominate Czechs, the minorities regarded the new centralisation as directed against them.

Until this year the Czechoslovak Government declared itself unable to consider concessions to the minorities other than those which could be made within the framework of the Czechoslovak constitution. Although the 1927 law was incorporated in the constitution, with their Nationalities Statute, which is now all but completed, the Czechs are offering its cancellation and a return to *Doppelgeleisigkeit*. This means that district and provincial assemblies are to be wholly elected, and that their powers are to be greatly expanded; indeed a good deal of legislative activity is to be transferred from the National Assembly (central Parliament) to the provincial diets, the central Parliament being left with little more than questions of finance, foreign policy and defence. The Sudeten Germans, who number only 22 per cent. in the Republic as a whole, will be in a relatively strong position in the diet of the province of Bohemia, where they form nearly a third of the population. Similarly the Hungarians will be relatively strong in Slovakia. Within each Diet, moreover, the bigger racial groups are to form sectional units of their own to control those things which concern only their own people. (This sectional system, by the way, is a return to the compromise which was brought about in Moravia in 1905, nor is it by any means new in Bohemia). Education, agricultural organisation, roads, hygiene and social welfare are to be mainly supervised by the racial sections of the district and provincial assemblies.

The two other main points now guaranteed by the Czechs are "proportionality" in the distribution of State jobs, and the revision of the language laws, which also form an integral part of the constitution. Since proportionality is not contested in theory, it need only be said that it involves in practice a long time lag, especially during a period when the posts at the disposal of the central Government are likely to be reduced. With regard to the language question it should not be forgotten that the Czechs are particularly sensitive about it, in the first place on account of the social stigma which Germans have sought to attach to Czech, and secondly because, living as an island in a German sea, insistence upon their own language has seemed to the Czechs to be the condition of preserving their identity. Nor is the language question easy to settle. It is clearly impracticable to claim that the members of every minority in Czechoslovakia shall have the right to be officially dealt with in their own language all over the country. But to settle it by province, as it is now proposed to do, seems satisfactory enough; in each province two or three languages will be placed upon an equal footing, and it appears that German, like Czech or Slovak, will always be among them, though there are three times as many Czechs and Slovaks as Germans in the Republic.

There is a great deal of Czech feeling against the reforms which the Czechoslovak Government is proposing, and which do, upon analysis, show themselves to be consistent with the Franco-British formula of conceding everything that will not endanger the existence of the democratic Czechoslovak State. Neither Lord Runciman nor anyone else, however, will be able to harmonise the Sudeten German memorandum of June 7th with this principle. That memorandum has historical interest and great political significance. It goes back to many pre-war demands of the nationalistic Bohemian Germans, such as the use of German in Prague, whose Slavonic character all Czechs have long wished to emphasise. It incorporates, while greatly extending, the six Bills brought forward by the Sudetendeutsche Partei (S.d.P.) in April, 1937, and it includes the Carlsbad demands of April, 1938.

It rejects provincial autonomy altogether, claiming racial autonomy in its stead. Owing to the mixed nature of the mainly German districts, this cannot be territorially realised; yet the S.d.P. memorandum implicitly claims the whole of Northern Bohemia, which the Sudeten Germans, regardless of the steady influx of Czech labour,

always insisted on considering exclusively their own in pre-1914 days.

Indeed, while the frontiers between Sudeten Germans and Czechs have been fluid for centuries, the Germans now demand the restitution of everything they have lost since 1918. This is a particularly disagreeable demand to the Czechs, for whom post-war administration has remedied pre-war injustice. All partisanship apart, it is unquestionably true that, before the war, many Czech children went to German schools for lack of their own, and that it would, therefore, be extremely unjust to insist upon the restoration of the German schools which subsequently became superfluous.

The Czechoslovak Government has not yet completely worked out the exact relationship to be established between the central and the provincial and inferior local authorities, but it certainly will wish to retain considerable powers for the Ministries in Prague. If the Sudeten German sections wish to introduce Nazi textbooks into their schools, the Ministry of Education must have power to forbid this. The S.d.P. memorandum proposes, however, the wholesale abolition of the Ministries of Education, Social Welfare and Health, since these are to be entirely replaced by racial authorities. While claiming territorial autonomy, the S.d.P. are also insisting upon their right to coerce all Germans in Czechoslovakia, even those who do not live within the frontiers demanded by the Henleinists. Thus the S.d.P. memorandum, in demanding the right to establish compulsory organisations for all Sudeten Germans, is demanding that these shall lose their constitutional rights as free individuals, a claim which is again incompatible with the formula of the Western Powers.

As envisaged by the S.d.P., Czechoslovakia will in future consist of four or five racial groups, each with much the same standing in the National Assembly. The deputies in each group are to elect a leader who is to be *ex officio* a Cabinet Minister, but the Cabinet is no longer to require the confidence of the National Assembly, which will, therefore, be reduced to insignificance. By dissolving the Czechoslovak Republic into segregated racial groups, the three anti-democratic groups (as such) of the Sudeten Germans, the Hungarians and the Poles will outnumber the Czechoslovak or Czech and Slovak groups, which will actually represent a two-thirds majority in the whole State.

Of the anti-democratic groups the Sudeten German is bound to be by far the most powerful, both on account of its size and its relationship to Germany. It can never be sufficiently emphasised that, according to the National Socialist view, which, the S.d.P. insists, its members must be free to profess, the Sudeten Germans are only an inseparable part of the whole German race. Whoever invests them with an entity of their own is guilty, like poor Dr. Dollfuss in Austria, of the anti-racial crime of separatism. Thus the claims embodied in their memorandum are claims made on behalf of the German race as a whole. Each racial leader in the Czechoslovak State the Henleinists desire to establish is to be automatically entitled to a seat on the supreme Defence Council. If the Czechs accepted this proposition they might just as well invite the German military attaché in Prague to attend the consultations of the Czechoslovak General Staff.

QUACK MEDICINES

LAST Tuesday, in the House of Lords, attention was once again drawn to the persistent scandal of uncontrolled quackery. Lord Horder, who introduced the subject, deserves well of the British public for his perseverance in an uphill campaign. On this occasion, as on many previous ones, he has taken the common-sense line, and has refrained from professional self-righteousness. Quackery, we know, is but little less prevalent in the Harley Street area than it is elsewhere; and doctors cannot escape responsibility for that state of the public mind which cupidity and fraud find it so easy to exploit.

The commercial success of quackery is due almost entirely to the ignorance and hyper-suggestibility of 99 per cent. of the population; and for this ignorance the mystery-mongering of orthodox doctors throughout the ages is largely to blame. Lately, a great change has taken place in the tone and attitude of the organised medical profession. Both conscience and self-preservative foresight have developed. A professional tradition, the source of which lies so far back as the days of ancient Greece, has survived, though at times it has dried to a mere trickle. Medicine has now become very largely socialised, economically and otherwise, with the result that the leaders of the profession, and an increasing number of its members, are becoming more and more conscious of their public obligations and responsibilities. The recent activities of the British Medical Association in the public interest are a sign of the change.

The magnitude of the proprietary medicine trade is shown by the fact that the total amount spent every year on the maintenance of all the voluntary hospitals and all the municipal and other provided hospitals, is roughly equal to the amount spent on secret remedies and other proprietary drugs and semi-therapeutic foods—namely, about £30,000,000 a year. That fact has only to be stated to show the absurdity of the situation. In the course of his speech last Tuesday, Lord Horder referred to a

> famous group which purveys medicines mainly for nervous and digestive disorders, which has budgeted for a sum of nearly £1,000,000 for press advertisement alone during the coming year. The profits on the deferred shares have risen from £40,000 to £280,000 in the past six years. In 1931 the 3*s.* shares stood at 5*s.* 7*d.*; in each of the past three years they rose to above £3. It is no wonder that the Board thought it a wise thing to make a large donation to one of the London hospitals.

"He could not say," he added, "whether it was ear-marked for the patients who had doctored themselves with the company's medicines."

I doubt if many of the proprietary medicines or of the proprietary semi-medicinal foods advertised in the newspapers to the tune of three or four million pounds a year directly do much more harm than do some of the medicines and advice prescribed or advised by qualified doctors, and I am glad that Lord Horder did not lay undue stress on this aspect of the question. On the other hand, in so far as the thirty million pounds spent annually on these advertised "remedies" exceeds the cost of available articles of equivalent value, the business constitutes a serious social evil—especially when the money spent is diverted from the purchase of hygienic desirabilities. Anyone who can persuade a poor man to spend on a product which, possibly truthfully, is claimed to contain in concentrated form the essential dietetic ingredients of a pennyworth of bread and cheese, the amount which would buy a plate of roast beef with cabbage, potatoes and Yorkshire pudding, is doing his bit towards lowering the level of the public health. This is where the lack of public hygienic knowledge comes in—though it is interesting and surprising to read the testimonials given to the owners of such proprietary products by people of the highest intellectual standing. After all, it was one of the greatest of English philosophers who most enthusiastically advocated the universal consumption of Tar Water as a cure for nearly all human ills.

It is in the advertising of proprietary medicines, rather

than in the medicines themselves, that the true evil lies. Just at the time when the medical profession is beginning to realise that health is something more than mere absence of disease, and is trying to educate the public into a better attitude, advertisements are appearing everywhere calculated to maintain ill-health, moral and physical. To quote Lord Horder again:

> For every £100 which the Government spent on making the people health-conscious, the quack medicine-mongers paid £1,000 in making them disease-conscious. If the State protected the citizen's property from financial sharks in the matter of "share-pushing," was it not still more important to take steps to protect their health from wanton damage?

Many years ago, I wrote an article in this paper on the advertising of patent medicines, and in reply thereto several letters appeared, some appreciative, some protesting. It was suggested by one correspondent that the great Advertising Associations were placing, and had placed, a check on fraudulent and improper advertising of every kind. I pointed out in reply that the Advertising Associations' "Investigation Department" must have an easy-going conscience; and I quoted from contemporary newspapers one or two advertisements, of which these are specimens. "Internal and external abscesses! Stubborn case yields to ——"; "Nature has one proved and certain preventive and curative agent for Influenza in ——. It attacks the root of the trouble through the blood stream"; "No matter who is in the home suffering from kidney trouble, no better advice can be given than this. Go at once to your nearest chemist and get a supply of ——. They will quickly end the pain and danger of kidney trouble"; "Internal and external growths. Wonderful —— disperses bodily growths without operation." I could supplement these sample advertisements endlessly, many from the pages of the "National" dailies.

There are three great evils associated with the proprietary medicine trade at the present time—and they are all remediable by simple political action. One is the putting forward of claims contrary to established facts, calculated to induce people suffering from dangerous disorders to postpone effective treatment until it is no longer effective; secondly, the lowering of the standard of living of poor people by inducing them, by means of arguments which they are not in a cultural position to dispute, to waste their already inadequate means on preparations in themselves harmless but sold at fantastic prices, compared with equally potent articles obtainable at a fraction of the price; thirdly, and perhaps the most important of all, the corrupting of the uninstructed public mind by putting before it expressions of half-truths, the psychologic effect of which is inevitably and deliberately at variance with the sort of hygienic truth that we are collectively spending a lot of money to propagate.

But let us not delude ourselves with the notion that by some stroke of the legislative pen we can get rid of the popular love of magic, mystery and miracle. Too many miracles have come off. If these patent medicine vendors were mere fanatics and cranks, I would be the last to worry about them. I have seen too many fanatics and cranks come into their own. But the average newspaper proprietor, advertising agent, or proprietor or shareholder of a patent medicine, is neither a fanatic nor a crank. He is usually physiologically ignorant and often a very pleasant human being. But he is too unimaginative and ill-informed and earthly to be other than what is commonly called realist. It behoves us to be equally realist.

There is something in Viscount Gage's contention that "repression alone is one of the most dubious of all lines of progress." Personally, I believe that the best answer to evil propaganda is sound counter-propaganda. The law of libel should be so amended as to safeguard any member of the public who openly criticises the value of any advertised preparation, or the accuracy of any statement made by way of commercial propaganda. Other immediately practicable steps are: the establishment within the Ministry of Health of an Expert Committee, mainly scientific but partly socio-political, whose business it would be to control the sale of all proprietary medicines and all proprietary foods claiming specific hygienic properties. None of these substances should legally be offered to the public until it has been entered on a register kept by this Expert Committee; a condition of registration being that the full and precise composition of each substance had been disclosed and confirmed. All advertisements of these products, whether intended for newspaper publication or for general circulation in other ways, should be compulsorily submitted to this Committee before being issued to the public. Probably, it would further be desirable that a straightforward statement of the constituents and their proportion should appear on the container of every bottle or box offered for sale.

There is a class of proprietary medicines and other preparations with which it would be absurd materially to interfere. To quote a passage from the celebrated P.E.P. Report on the British Health Services, published last year: "It is in the public interest that there should be on the market an ample range of medicines, drugs, simple remedies, stimulants and so forth for use in the appropriate conditions. It is also desirable, in many cases, that these should be standardised and advertised." A similar concession to common sense is expressed in Professor A. J. Clark's excellent booklet, *Patent Medicines*, one of the most valuable of the sixpenny monographs issued by the publishers of *Fact*. Professor Clark agrees that in the case of "such preparations as saline laxatives, emulsions of liquid paraffin, aspirin, etc., the ordinary individual is quite capable of determining for himself the quantity he requires." It would, indeed, be absurd to suggest that every time anyone who lets himself go a trifle too laxly on a previous evening and feels a bit so-so in the morning, knowing quite well from experience that a glass of fizzy what-not will make him feel normal in a couple of hours, should be compelled to rush to Harley Street or its local equivalent and, at a cost of anything from 7*s*. 6*d*. to three guineas, get a prescription for a Seidlitz powder or some other preparation named in the Pharmacopœia, the constituents of which are practically identical with that of some popular remedy with whose virtues we are well acquainted. There are undoubtedly a considerable number of simple drugs which the reasonably educated public can take on its own responsibility; and these form an ever-increasing proportion of the preparations advertised in the reputable papers. These do vary both in elegance of presentation and in purity of content. The elegance of presentation we can safely leave to the public taste; the purity of content may well be periodically tested. Preparations of this kind, however, are not the ones about which we need to worry ourselves very seriously.

The quack medicine vendors have had the most astounding luck. Just before the war, the House of Commons received a Report on Patent Medicines from the Select Committee which they had appointed. The practical steps which they recommended were based on the facts that there were "many secret remedies making grossly exaggerated claims of efficacy, causing injury by leading sick persons to delay in securing medical treatment, sold for improper purposes, professing to cure diseases incurable by medication, or essentially and deliberately fraudulent; and that this class of remedies contains none which spring from therapeutical or medical knowledge, but are put upon the market by ignorant persons, and in many cases by cunning swindlers who exploit for their own profit the apparently invincible credulity of the public." On the ominous date of August 4th, 1914, the House of Commons ordered that this Report be printed. Of course, that was the end of the Report. In 1936, a Bill was introduced to regulate the advertising of Medical and Surgical Appliances. This Bill came up for second reading on the day of the Grand National, and, naturally enough, was talked out. It will be lamentable indeed if the evils to which attention has once again been drawn, are once again to be left unchecked and unregulated.

HARRY ROBERTS

A LONDON DIARY

CROSSING the Channel for the Congress of the International Peace Campaign last Friday we could see in the distance the destroyers and aeroplanes that were escorting the King and Queen back to England. And in Paris the boulevards were still gay with bunting, the floodlighting was entrancing, and the walk to see the heraldic lions on the Champs Elysées and Loch Ness monsters in the Seine well worth while, even in the steaming heat. France does this sort of thing well, and the public has taste and objects if things are done badly. The Madeleine, for instance, was defaced at first by gargantuan cockades of red, white and blue, but the protest was such that this nonsense was abolished. Most striking was the Place Vendôme, draped in crimson velvet. (The job was executed by the leading Paris undertaker !) Everywhere people told me that there had been great enthusiasm about the royal visit ; it typified, no doubt, the security of British friendship, and it was unfortunate from this point of view that the French police, terrified by their experience when Alexander of Jugo-Slavia came to France and was murdered with Barthou, felt it necessary to keep the crowds completely barricaded off from the royal procession. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm was great. A friend who lives in a Paris suburb tells me that night after night he heard French families practising " le God-Save " on their pianos and that at a typically bourgeois restaurant near Paris he saw a wedding party, entirely consisting of French people, drinking the toast of " le Kaing."

* * *

The International Peace Campaign's conference was a big affair with about a thousand delegates. It passed very practical resolutions, pledging itself to organise large consignments of food for Spain (a million pounds was mentioned as the sum to be collected by Christmas), to establish an international hospital in China, arrange for Commissions to go to open towns that are being bombed, compel democratic governments to supply the victims of aggression with anti-aircraft guns and so forth. It is something that the movement that began two years ago with a conference in Brussels that was not allowed even to mention the Spanish war should have got at last (the war is not over yet) to the point of promising food for starving people. The technique of these democratic conferences wants overhauling. The plenary sessions are far too long and the Commissions that are supposed to be business-like too big. There are far too many speeches. When what may be the decisive battle for western democracy is being fought only a few hours (bombing time) away, we can take for granted the oratorical powers and democratic sentiments both of Paul-Boncour and Marcel Cachin. Apart from one or two opening statements, every speech ought to be of a purely business nature and restricted to ten minutes. The one orator present whom the whole audience wanted to hear was " Pasionaria," and she was not allowed to speak, because some Catholic groups who have come into the I.P.C. might have been offended if the delegates had had their way. The Chair refused to yield even at the cost of creating a riot. The cost was greater than that, for many came away angry and disappointed. For Pasionaria is probably the world's greatest orator ; hearing her once in Valencia, I felt, as thousands of others have felt, the compulsion of her voice and personality—even though I could not understand the words she spoke. If the object was really to help Spain, Pasionaria could have collected all the money that was in our pockets for a start and sent us all away filled with courage and enthusiasm. As it is, we have to do the work all the same—but without the inspiration and the feeling of unity with the Spanish people that Pasionaria's voice would have brought.

* * *

Travelling by train in the Midlands I fell into conversation with a young married couple—a prep. schoolmaster and his wife, I guessed from their appearance. But I learnt that he was in fact a semi-skilled worker in a Morris factory and that his job was to shove the metal into the ovens. " Just three motions," he explained, " *so* and *so* and *so* ; and when times are good it goes on for eleven hours a day." I could not help wondering how this sensitive and thoughtful man could stand the monotony, and I asked his wife. " Heavens," she said, " he is lucky. Though he is unskilled, his work is unique ; so he doesn't get laid off when work is short on any particular line. He's had three and a half years at the ovens without a break." " Yes, but what does it feel like ? " I asked him. " Well, it is hard labour with solitary confinement. If someone comes near I grab him and chatter like a madman. And, of course, like everyone else, I find myself going *so* and *so* and *so* as I sit in the bus going home. Funny to think that if I am really lucky I shall still be doing it in thirty years' time ! If it wasn't for Union work I'd go mad." " What do you think about mostly at the ovens ? " I asked. " Nothing," he said, and then his face suddenly brightened. " You know, between the walls of the ovens there are two families of ants. I've watched them for months and they cheer me no end when I'm down." The train pulled up, the young couple got out and left me thinking about modern civilisation.

* * *

The Westminster Theatre has recently filled the position among London theatres of the Court Theatre under the famous Granville Barker-Vedrenne management (1904–7). The public have had a chance of seeing these exceptionally interesting plays and sometimes these have been acted unusually well : *Mourning Becomes Electra* was a shining example. A new company has taken the Westminster Theatre, called the Mask Company, of which Mr. Priestley is a member. The theatre will be run on a no-profit-making basis, thereby escaping the entertainment tax. Consequently the seats will be cheaper than at West-End theatres, and range from 2*s.* 6*d.* to possibly 8*s.* 6*d.* Mr. Michael Macowan, who has done excellent work, will produce ; Mr. Parker will remain the manager as before. They have formed a small permanent company, which will be supplemented by outside actors for exceptional parts. No new plays will be acted, as it is not intended to keep the same play running for more than four to six weeks. Mr. Mark Dignam, who played Ezra so admirably in *Mourning Becomes Electra*, and Miss Ruth Lodge, who is a star of the Liverpool Repertory Theatre, have been engaged as members of the small permanent cast. The Mask Company is therefore as near a repertory company as premises which afford little storage room for scenery allow. They open on September 3rd with *Troilus and Cressida* in modern dress, a device which ought at least to make the bitterness of that play more apparent than is usual in performance. It will be followed by that extraordinary play, *He Who Gets Slapped*, by Andreev, and then by *Dangerous Corner*, which a good many people want to see again. At Christmas they will act Goldsmith's *The Good-natured Man*, which has not been performed on a London stage for many years and is as delightful as *She Stoops to Conquer* ; later will come O'Neil's *Marko Millions* and lastly, one of the finest of famous plays, Calderon's *Life is a Dream*.

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Pickers-up of unconsidered trifles in the way of knowledge will find a good threepenny-worth in a pamphlet I have just been reading. It is a *Brief Guide to Government Publications*, by F. R. Cowell, published by H.M. Stationery Office, and it contains a lot of interesting information about the development of this flourishing State enterprise. The Stationery Office, established as long ago as 1786, has come in recent years to be one of the biggest printing and publishing businesses in the country. It has an output of between 5,000 and 6,000 separate " documents " each year—documents that range from Bills and Bluebooks to pamphlets, weekly journals, guide books and learned (as well as popular) treatises on half the subjects under the sun. And the value of its annual sales is about £200,000. The great stream of parliamentary papers began in 1801 (though Government publications, including the journals and the votes and proceedings of the House of

Commons date back far beyond that). But it was only a century ago that they were sold to the public, and even so eminent a person as Jeremy Bentham, we are told, had to rely on the good offices of a M.P. to get copies. From 1837 for nearly half a century all the parliamentary papers of the House of Commons were sold by the famous official printers, Hansard. But "Hansard" is now only a popular misnomer; for in 1882 the Stationery Office was appointed publisher to both Houses, though sales to the public were still conducted through an agent. Now it conducts the work itself, in its own shops in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Manchester and Belfast, and through the ordinary booksellers.

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For years English residents in Italy found it prudent to speak not of the Duce but of Mr. Smith. They now call him Juliet, because he is always on the balcony.

* * *

Lord Runciman, I understand, likes to spend August in the Hebrides, sailing gently on the breath of a summer breeze from one calm island to another equally happy. He is not likely to get much sailing this year; indeed, he is embarking on the most difficult possible job with a ghastly load of responsibility on his shoulders. As most people think that no very acute crisis is likely in the early stage of negotiations with an accepted negotiator on the spot, the next few weeks are regarded as particularly good for holiday-making. Important officials are packing their bags, hoping that Lord Runciman will make this silly season unlike most other Augusts—for August is apt to prove the most dangerous and exciting of all months. God and Hitler being willing, Critic is also going to stop writing for a fortnight. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to D. Lister.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

Courting couples are to be allowed to hold hands in church at a special service for young people which the Rev. J. T. Hodgson, Vicar of Trinity Church, Wood Green, N., is holding to-morrow.—*Daily Express.*

Five women teachers at the parish church Sunday-school at Earls Barton, near Wellingborough, have been dismissed by the vicar, the Rev. L. A. Ewart, after a dispute about arrangements for the school's annual outing.

A letter sent by Mr. Ewart to Mrs. H. Goode, another teacher, reads: "One has enough to contend with in this parish without battling against the whims of one or two Sunday-school teachers.

"This revolutionary spirit will have a very bad effect in the parish, and those who cause it will have to answer to God for their actions. Kneel down and ask God to guide you, and I know what the answer will be. . . . It is ridiculous to think of taking the children to Whipsnade. I have the spiritual care of the Sunday-school children in Earls Barton. I cannot allow my authority to be overridden. So I have dismissed the five teachers."—*Evening Standard.*

For the first time a competition for the best-dressed woman rider in the Row, Hyde Park, was held yesterday, the judge being Sir Walter Gilbey, frequent critic of fashions in the Row.

When I asked why she preferred to ride side-saddle, Miss Home said: "It is much more comfortable and safer. You are also regarded as more of a lady, and gates are opened for you when you are hunting."—*Daily Telegraph.*

During the last year every single prejudice, imaginary or otherwise, that he might have had when he went to Argentina had entirely disappeared. He found the Argentines the most natural, and if he might say so, the most English people he had ever met.—British Ambassador to Buenos Aires reported in *Times.*

NOT GOING FOR A WALK

I WAS enjoying the peace of Sunday in the country and was looking forward to lunch when it was announced that a lady and her two children who were also staying at the cottage had not returned from a walk. It was already ten minutes past the time for lunch, and my hostess surprised me by saying in a nervous tone that she hoped that nothing had happened to them. Another ten minutes went by, and she suggested that we—or, at least, I—should go out and look for them. I pointed out that there were five or six ways home from the hill they had gone out to climb and that some of these were through woods and across fields and that I should be very unlikely to meet them. At the end of half-an-hour she said: "One of the children may have sprained an ankle in a wood and Sarah may be unable to get help." I assured her that Sarah would find some way of getting help, and that in any case it was very unlikely that one of the children had sprained an ankle. "Anything may have happened," she declared, "at this time of the year one of them may have been bitten by an adder. I wish I had warned Sarah about adders." I cast a vehement doubt on the imagined adder-bite. "You don't seem to care," she said; "you don't seem to realise that one of those children may have been bitten by a dog. You know that brute of a dog at the stile. I ought to have warned Sarah about it."

At the end of forty minutes, my hostess had expanded her explanation of the late arrivals to include one of the children's having been run over by a motor car. "Let's stop all the motorists coming from that direction," she urged, "and ask them whether they have seen a woman and two little girls anywhere looking like Sarah and the children." "We should have to explain," I objected, "that the woman and girls have either been bitten by adders or bitten by dogs or that they have sprained ankles or, perhaps, have been run over by a motor car. You can't tell a stranger a story like that."

"I can't bear to do nothing," said my hostess, looking thoroughly miserable. "In that case," I suggested, "let's go on with lunch." "You're perfectly heartless," she said. Then a new thought struck her. "The children went out without hats," she groaned, "and one of them may have got sunstroke and Sarah have to carry her home." "In that case," I repeated, "let's go on with lunch. Whether the children return with adder-bites or dog-bites, whether they have sprained ankles or have been run over by a motor car, or are suffering from sunstroke, we shall be all the more able to help them if we have not allowed ourselves to grow weak with hunger."

At last, she was prevailed on to sit down at table, and, as she could think for the moment of no other accident that might have happened to the walkers, she ate her roast beef with a good deal more relish than I should have expected. She said, however, that if they had not returned by three o'clock she would have to ring up the police. She declared that they could not possibly have lost their way because she had given Sarah a map. Luckily, as I was annoying her by pointing out that it is usually people with maps who lose their way, three cheerful voices were heard and in a second or two three weary figures had thrown themselves into chairs, gasping for something to drink. They had, as I knew all the time, lost their way and had walked twice as far as they intended when they set out.

The moral of this is obvious. It is: "If you have visitors staying with you in the country, never let them go for a walk alone." They will inevitably get lost even in places in which you would think it impossible to get lost. I have known a visitor to get lost within two hundred yards of the house. I have spent many week-ends with large parties in the country, and invariably any visitor or visitors whom the host let out of his sight got lost. I remember one week-end during which a charming and brilliant lady led a number of her fellow-visitors through an interminable jungle of nettles six feet high in search of a short cut which, she said, was shown on her map. Having

got them into the thick of the nettles, she kept their spirits up by telling them that a little further on there was a bridge by crossing which they would save three miles on the return journey and be home in time for supper. Unfortunately, when they arrived at the place where the map showed the bridge to be, the bridge had disappeared all but a piece at one end, and what was left of it was no more a possible means of crossing a river than the Pont d'Avignon. She then looked at her map again and decided that as the footpath shown on it—for it was a very old map—led into another jungle of nettles, there was nothing for it but to plunge into the jungle. Mr. Peter Fleming talks disparagingly of the possibilities of adventure in Brazil. Let him try Berkshire under the guidance of a lady on a week-end visit with an out-of-date map. He will find search parties being sent after him as though he were Livingstone in Africa, motor cars flying in all directions and imaginations running riot as though he had disappeared in a country infested by cannibals, lions and boa-constrictors. It was after the experiences of that week-end that I made up my mind never again to allow myself to become agitated about visitors who go out for a walk and are late for a meal till I know that something serious has happened to them. Imaginary adder-bites no longer distress me. I refuse to meet a visitor's sprained ankle half-way.

A thing that puzzles me, however, is why any visitor wants to go for a walk in the country. There is something to be said for taking a walk if you live in a town near a park or a common, but why take a walk in the country when the whole thing is already at your door? I do not think that during my last few week-ends at a country cottage I have been at any time more than half a mile from the house. Gold-crests had built their nest in a yew in the garden, and till quite recently the cock was singing his Tom Thumb of a song, like the faint echo of a hedge-sparrow. There was a time when I would have walked miles to see gold-crests. Now I can watch them from a deck-chair. How exquisitely indifferent they are to the human presence as they potter among the branches of the ash and flit, scarcely bigger than bees, along the hedge. My only regret, as I watch them, is that I have no longer the sharp eyes of a child that can see the colour on the goldcrest's crown so much oftener than I. Even when birds so conspicuously coloured as the goldfinches come into the garden, their colours delight my imagination rather than my eyes. Fortunately, human beings can get pleasure, not only from seeing things, but from knowing that things worth seeing are all about them. The goldfinches that I hear are mostly out of sight or flitting against a background of sky that makes them as colourless as sparrows. Even so, their voices seem to fill the place with colour as well as with music; and this can all be enjoyed from a deck-chair.

Then, a fortnight ago, there were the flycatchers feeding their young at the nest in the withered ivy on an oak. How timidly they brought their beakfuls of food by circuitous routes to the nest, scarcely daring to make the last spring to the gaping mouths of their young lest they should disclose the site of their home to a two-legged monster! It is, perhaps, a little heartless to keep on watching birds as they make journey after journey, hour after hour, collecting food in the air for their infants and almost too flutteringly alarmed to deliver it at the nest. Still it is difficult to resist the temptation to look through a pair of field-glasses at the back of a young flycatcher's throat gluttonously gaping for food.

On Sunday two jays came into the garden, and, when they had departed with shrieks that seemed to tear the atmosphere, one of the little girls, searching under the oaks discovered a blue wing feather. My neighbour does not like jays. He declares that a jay can strip a row of peas or beans in five minutes. Fond though I am of peas and beans, however, I cannot feel hostile to a bird with that pretty feather. After the jays came a nuthatch and hammered noisily on the branch of an oak as though it were cracking a nut. And after the nuthatch came martins, scores of them, apparently young and learning one of the most important things in a martin's life—how to sit on a telephone wire without wobbling. They certainly wobbled—incompetent Blondins, balancing themselves with wildly fluttering wings, with tails now pointing heavenward and now twisted underneath them, swinging and swaying till you would have thought they would be seasick. Then, as if at a parental command, they would be off into the air as one bird, skimming over the pond and enjoying themselves like infants at school released from a class into the playground.

I cannot help thinking, that if visitors to the country realised that all these things could be seen from a garden, they would cease to indulge in the habit of going for walks. Apart from this, they should reflect that it is only by remaining in the garden that they can rid a tender-hearted hostess of the certainty that they have been bitten by dogs or adders or have sprained their ankles or been run over by a motor car or been laid out by sunstroke. Y. Y.

BACK TO THE LAND?

II.—GRASS

GRASS is by far the most important crop that our land produces. Nearly 16 million of our 24.8 million of cultivated acres are in grass, together with another 5½ million acres of rough grazings. Except for New Zealand and parts of South America we have, or could have, the best grass in the world. It is well suited by our climate and it is the basis of our live-stock farming, which is responsible for 70 per cent. of our total agricultural output.

Yet it is the crop we probably know least about. Only in the last decade the late Professor T. B. Wood of Cambridge, when asked to write an article about grass, looked up the available information on the subject and found that practically nothing had been written about it. Since then great progress has been made in the store of our knowledge, thanks chiefly to Professor R. G. Stapledon. New strains have been bred that have immensely simplified the task of the grassland improver, new machines have been introduced, far more is known about the art of cultivating good grass. We cannot be too thankful for this, for if our agricultural production is to be increased, proper management of grassland is the foundation. But we are not making use of this knowledge. Throughout England and Wales there are worn-out permanent pastures and rough grazings that are carrying nothing like the head of stock they might. In a great many cases the old-fashioned leases prevent anything from being done; for the plough is needed to rip up the old, worn-out mat, let air, light and health into the soil and prepare the way for sowing down with better strains of grass; but these leases forbid that because they were designed to protect the landlord against his permanent pastures being exploited and their latent fertility cashed in corn crops. It cannot be beyond the wit of man to devise a more up-to-date form of lease that gives protection to the landlord against the exploiter and yet permits good husbandry.

But an even greater cause of grassland neglect is apathy, lack of capital, lack of confidence to encourage the farmer to lay out money to increase his production with reasonable assurance that a market will be found for it. The Government's "fertility" policy, that subsidises lime and basic slag to improve the land, is admirable so far as it goes, but it does not take the last vital step to make it wholly admirable in farmers' eyes—it does not, except for wheat, sugar beet and bacon pigs, guarantee that greater production from our more fertile fields would be marketed without reducing prices through the increased supplies. Emphasise the words "reducing prices," for it is too easily assumed that farmers will only produce more if they receive increased prices. That is not so. Where the market has been guaranteed, as with wheat, pigs and, virtually, in the case of milk, increased production has taken place, more wheat than the original quantity for which a price was guaranteed has been obtained without an increase in price, more pigs are being produced than in some of the

years when pig prices were higher but the outlook more uncertain, more milk was forthcoming from the day the Milk Board was brought into being and brought a sense of greater stability into the producers' end of the business. How far we could increase production without increasing prices is another matter, but a farm is not so unlike a factory that it cannot reduce its costs by increasing its turnover—provided there is a market. No one can make even a guess at how much we could produce of any given commodity at any given price, so there would be much to be said for guaranteeing a reasonable price up to a specified output, as we do with the wheat subsidy, and then seeing about the desirability of revising the maximum output for which the price is guaranteed in the light of the knowledge that would come forth.

But it is out of all reason to ask the farmer in West Leicestershire, for example, to buy tractors and cultivating machinery, fertilise and fence his fields and supply them with water, put up new buildings, find new men and double his output of beef, if the only result is the breaking of the beef price. The 1938 break in sheep prices, in which a record lambing season has been no small factor, has been a lesson to deter the enterprising, if any further lesson were needed.

But if a feeling of confidence could be set up (and let it be remembered that it takes three years to produce an animal for the beef market) an immense increase in the capacity of our grasslands is possible. One has only to regard the discrepancies in our pasture-land output to realise that. Sir Thomas Middleton has estimated that our best pasture-lands would produce from 180 to 200 lb. of meat per acre in an average year without using any oil cake. He puts the production of the poorer pasture at 90–100 lb. per acre, but, in summing up, he doubts if the nation obtains more than 72 lb. of meat per annum per acre from its grasslands Professor R. G. Stapledon considers that the stock-carrying capacity of our farms could be almost doubled by proper management of the grass; the county agricultural organisers in many different counties have roughly agreed with this view, and in the past few months I have seen land in Devon, Cornwall and Wales increased from a stock-carrying capacity of nil, or perhaps a sheep to five acres, to a sheep or more per acre or a dairy cow per two acres. Medium pasture can similarly be improved, by the right seed and good management, to carry three sheep to the acre instead of one and a half. This medium pasture would probably be the best on which to make a start.

Broadly speaking, the proper management of grassland means the end of permanent pasture in the accepted sense and the substitution of a system that has been christened "Alternate Husbandry" and would be based on keeping the pasture down in five or six year leys, ploughing it up again, cashing the latent fertility with corn crops, working in one or two fodder crops and then grassing down again for another five or six years This, of course, is only a variation of the rotational farming that our forefathers taught us, and a very similar system has been practised in the Argentine for many years. Its advantages are that it builds up humus in the soil and keeps it healthy, it increases the output of the farm and makes it into more of a self-contained, self-reliant unit, insulated from the shocks of the world feeding stuffs market; and it encourages an active, enterprising spirit on the farm, in contrast to the listless, defeatist attitude to be found to-day on so many farms where poor, low-rented pasture and imported feeding stuffs just permit the occupier to keep his head above water. The Danes, faced with the same problem as ourselves of cheap corn from the virgin lands abroad, and with farms not so dissimilar in size as is usually supposed, have found that it has paid them to have 40 per cent. of their land in cereals, 16 per cent. in roots and under 17 per cent. in permanent grass. We have only 16 per cent. in cereals, 4 per cent. in roots and 44 per cent. in permanent grass.

But it cannot be too strongly emphasised that no hard and fast rules can be laid down about grassland management or any other type of farming. We have some permanent pasture that it would be folly to plough up, and on the heavy, marly clays the expense would be too great. No apostle of the plough has ever dreamt, in his wildest moments, of bringing some of our hill grazings into any regular arable farming rotation, and there would be a considerable area in which it would be senseless to plough up and re-sow more often than once in ten or twelve years. There must be the greatest possible flexibility to deal with conditions that, in this country, will change completely within ten miles. But supposing we apply "alternate husbandry" to 8 million acres of what is now permanent grass, and supposing that, by proper management, this acreage were in temporary leys with a production capacity increased by no more than 50 per cent. We could produce as much from under 5½ million acres of this pasture as from the present 8 million in the way we now manage it, and so should gain over 2½ million acres of fertile ploughable land as a free gift to grow something else.

But it should not be thought that the plant-breeder, the agricultural engineer and a change of method in farming are the only ways in which our grasslands can be made to carry more stock at lower cost. Mr. John Orr, of Manchester University, has shown some quite remarkable results obtained by careful costing of each field on a given farm in terms of what it produces. He, for the first time in England, I think, has opened up a new line of thought by thinking of recording the performances of each individual field on a farm just as we now record that of each cow, with a view to grading up those that come in the lower categories. It has given, among other things, further evidence of the importance of managing grazing well in order to manage the pastures well. It supports similar conclusions reached by Dr. Martin Jones, of Jealott's Hill. By managed grazing we can regulate the growth of the different grasses and even get rid of weeds. Some of our expert grass farmers have inherited this knowledge with their farms, but to many others its full importance has not yet been realised. Then there is grass-drying—the new process that enables young grass to be cut in a thunderstorm and turned into dried grass or meal within 40 minutes and with practically no loss of its exceptionally valuable qualities. As a means of making good hay in bad weather and something better than the best hay in good weather, grass-drying is one of the great agricultural discoveries of our times. Beyond that it is not safe to go, for we do not yet know how the land will stand up to the strain of this continual cropping, stimulated by artificial manures, nor do we know exactly how we should manure for it or what exactly is the best way to fit it into a rotation of grazing and hay-making. There is still plenty of room for improvement in the driers themselves and in the machines that cut and gather the young grass when six or eight inches high. There are grave dangers in regarding grass-drying as a means to sell yet another product off the farm for cash; but as an insurance against bad weather and a means for a farm to grow more of a highly nutritive product that it produces for its own use, the drier undoubtedly has a contribution to make.

We have become very clever at hay-making and can now cut, dry, gather and rick a field of hay and barely touch it by hand. We have thought a great deal about this from the labour and money saving point of view, but too little about it from the angle of quality. It now seems that certain of our mechanical operations are causing a less valuable product to be gathered than in the days when so much manual labour was required. Fortunately this can probably be corrected by a mechanical means. But we still have to debit the weather with a heavy bill for spoilt hay. It has been said that every year the English farms grow a hay crop worth £35 million and collect a product worth £20 million. In this respect the ancient method of tripod curing, which has never ceased to be practised for many centuries in some Continental countries, is beginning to return to Britain, although slowly. This method consists of building small cocks of hay round metal tripods in the fields so that the air blows through the hay to make it sweet and dry, but rain pours off it and too much sun cannot over-cure it. A little extra labour is required, but the

result is a superior product and often a great saving from spoiling by rain.

Many books could be written about grass and how to make the best use of it. But perhaps enough has been said to show that the grasslands of Britain could be made adequate to play their full part in a great expansion of our agricultural production and that, once they had been brought up to the full pitch of their efficiency, the cost of much of this increased production would be cheaper rather than dearer.

L. F. EASTERBROOK

Correspondence

MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS' UNION AND AUSTRIAN DOCTORS

SIR,—It is very much to be regretted that the writer of your London Diary should make such grave attacks on the Medical Practitioners' Union, as he did in your last issue, without first taking into consideration the position of the doctors whom it is the duty of the Union to protect.

The writer has complained of the Medical Practitioners' Union's "narrow-mindedness and selfishness," but has he ever studied the reasons which have prompted our policy?

Let us see how successive Governments have treated the general practitioner. Firstly, the present Government, at a recent inquiry, refused to reward the insurance practitioner with a proper capitation fee for his services under the National Health Insurance scheme. Secondly, the Government's midwifery service has deprived the general practitioner of all the midwifery cases of the poorer classes. Thirdly, the Government has, as recently as the beginning of this year, spent thousands of pounds on advertising their National Health Campaign. This means that patients, instead of visiting their doctor, attend the local clinic, which is staffed by whole-time medical officers and which has no use for the services of general practitioners. For these reasons the practitioner's earnings have been substantially reduced, and at the present time he is finding it very hard to make a decent living.

Is it, therefore, to be wondered at that, after seeing 200 or more foreign medical men start practice here, the Medical Practitioners' Union should eye the proposed admission of a further 500 with disapproval? If the Government decide to admit this number of refugees they will create a dangerous precedent, for there is good reason to believe that the political situation in both Italy and Spain will result in a similar influx of aliens from these countries.

The British practitioner has every sympathy with his foreign colleague, but the time has come when charity must needs begin at home. The Medical Practitioners' Union has received hundreds of replies to its Manifesto, and practitioners have shown themselves to be in favour of the Union's policy by an overwhelming majority.

Your correspondent goes on to suggest that alien doctors should be admitted—to quote his own words—"if they are willing to go to places where doctors are particularly needed." The Union would be interested to know what part of the British Isles he has in view.

ALFRED WELPLY,
General Secretary

Medical Practitioners' Union,
56 Russell Square,
London, W.C.1.

[Critic's complaint was that in its legitimate concern for the interests of its members, the Medical Practitioners' Union betrayed neither sympathy for the position of the Austrian doctors nor thought of the services which these eminent men might perform for the British public and for British medicine. We are well aware that individual doctors everywhere sympathise with their foreign colleagues; our complaint was that the Medical Practitioners' Union misrepresented them by dealing with the problem rather in the spirit of canvassing salesmen who object to competitors on their habitual beat. We do not advocate that 500, or any other number of, doctors should be admitted, but we do hold that the Medical Practitioners should not judge the issue purely on the narrow basis of the immediate economic interests of British doctors. A similar problem confronted the whole academic world when the Nazi persecution began in Germany, and it has been on the whole intelligently and generously tackled by the Universities. In many cases brilliant additions were made to the staffs without in any serious way damaging the interests of the existing members, and in some cases the teaching staffs voluntarily imposed a levy of 10 per cent. on their salaries for the relief of their persecuted colleagues. If they had taken the Medical Practitioners' view that charity begins at home, both charity and scholarship would have been the poorer.—ED., *N.S. & N.*].

NEW HOMES FOR JEWS

SIR,—Mr. Israel Cohen states as the Zionist view that "Palestine has such *enormous potentialities* (my italics) and demands such great efforts from the Jewish people that any diversion of energies to another country would prove harmful to the National Home . . without any hope of success elsewhere."

Palestine was chosen before the war for sentimental reasons; its geographical advantages or disadvantages were not considered relevant. It would be an accident if a country thus selected turned out to be the most suitable for colonisation. Palestine is smaller in area than Belgium; it possesses neither timber, coal, iron, petroleum nor any other mineral resources except a limited quantity of potash. Its supplies of water power are already proving insufficient and have to be supplemented by electricity derived from steam, based on imported fuel. Of its total area of 6,750,000 acres, not more than two million are capable of cultivation, and that only at a steadily increasing cost. The expenses of settling a family upon the land in Palestine may be taken as lying between £800 and £1,000. The corresponding figures for Paraná, Brazil (an average family of three and a half individuals) have been put by the High Commissioner for Refugees at £240; this includes passage from Europe. Similar figures were given for Colombia. It is worth remembering that the expenses of establishing the Greek refugees from Asia Minor averaged less than £80 per family. This did not include the purchase price of the land; even so, the comparison with Palestine is sufficiently striking.

The difficulties attending the development of that country are well illustrated in the following passage in the *Economist* of April 9th, 1938:

> A very large part of this money (i.e. bank deposits) is capital brought to Palestine by immigrants of small means who place it in the bank, while they look round for opportunities of using it remuneratively. This class of capitalists looking round for opportunities is very noticeable in Palestine. While they look, their capital diminishes.

Where are the "enormous potentialities" thus eluding profitable exploitation? Marginal returns diminish, and the concentrated settlement of a comparatively thickly populated area may become heavily uneconomical long before absolute saturation point, if there is such a thing, is reached. The more limited the amount of available Jewish capital, whether in public or in private hands, the more important it is that none of it be wasted, and that emigrants and refugees be placed, *ceteris paribus*, wherever the cost of establishing them is lowest. Hence the search for new lands.

The comparative failure of Biro-Bidjan, by the way, to which Mr. Cohen referred in his article, is hardly to the point. Biro-Bidjan was confined to Soviet citizens, Jews from other countries not being encouraged to settle. Since Jews in the U.S.S.R. enjoy equality of rights and opportunities, they had no special incentive to develop the territory.

ALEC GOLODETZ

39 Marlborough Hill, N.W.8.

SIR,—The controversy between Mr. Israel Cohen and "German Jew" was unfortunate, though perhaps not entirely unexpected. The bulk of the Jews in all countries is nowadays primarily interested in the assistance to be given to their persecuted brothers and much less in ideological doctrines. The problem confronting the world is not to settle Jews in conformity with or in opposition respectively to Zionist principles, but to find room for them where unbiased people—and this word applies equally to Jews—may reasonably expect them to be able to build up a safe existence in some way. That was the purpose of the conference at Evian-les-Bains, and all Jews are naturally agreed that all the Governments who took an active part in the work of that conference and who resolved to help the emigration of Jewish refugees from Germany, laid the foundation for all possible reasonable hopes for hundreds of thousands of persecuted Jews, and they are fully aware of the gratitude they owe them.

Although it is only a minority among world Jewry who regard Zionist principles as their own, not a single Jew outside a lunatic asylum would like to see the Zionist experiment in Palestine fail. All Jews, however much opposed they may be to Zionism, and I think, therefore, I can safely include "German Jew," are in-

terested in that wherever and on whatever basis Jews are being settled it should be done successfully. Any arguments which anti-Zionists may be able to put forward against the Palestinian experiment will have to be shelved for this reason, however justified they may be in individual respects.

I am glad to note that Mr. Cohen renounces totalitarian claims on behalf of Zionism. With the exception of the estimations made by the extremist Revisionists who are being regarded by practically all intelligent Zionists as a liability rather than as an asset, Palestine will not be able, even under the most fortunate possible circumstances, to absorb all the masses of persecuted Jews whose need of finding a new home is urgent. That is why Palestine can be regarded, even by most Zionists, I think, only as part of the solution to the imminent problem.

I myself know as well as Mr. Cohen and " German Jew " do what separates the Zionist from the non-Zionist. But it has been said of the Jews, and I think with justification, that, divided as otherwise they may be, they will always be united in front of a common danger. Let the Zionist renounce totalitarian claims and stop opposing, both in principle and in reality, the prospect of new homes for Jews being found or created. May the non-Zionist let the Zionist build up his work in Palestine. It will be the best for all concerned.

JEWISH REFUGEE

CANNING *v.* COLLINS

SIR,—Our clients, Messrs. Wm. Collins, Sons and Co., Ltd., have asked us to reply to the letter from Mr. David Pierson appearing in your current issue, on a point of general interest.

There is no puzzle about the case in question, and Hulton *v.* Jones has no bearing on it. In Hulton *v.* Jones the plaintiff called witnesses who stated on oath that they had identified the plaintiff with the fictitious character, and the Court accepted these witnesses as truthful and reasonable. The fictitious Capt. Canning in Miss Ashton's novel was portrayed as a thorough-paced scoundrel, and no one called by the real Capt. Canning was able to say that he or she identified the plaintiff in the character. On the contrary, they had to admit frankly that they did not think the character in the book could be identified with the plaintiff, and upon this point the case virtually collapsed.

If Mr. Pierson will bear in mind that the clue to every libel is the evidence of the reasonable man, his difficulty will disappear. It is only after identification has been established by the reasonable man that a plaintiff can claim to have been actionably ridiculed.

Hulton *v.* Jones, whereby, subject to reasonably established identification, an innocent publisher and/or author can be hit—and hit very hard—by the " long arm of coincidence," remains effective law (many would add, unfortunately), but it is to be hoped that the somewhat haphazard invocation of that law, to which the world of letters has been subjected of recent years, will be discouraged, as one result of the action under discussion.

5 and 6 Raymond Buildings, RUBINSTEIN, NASH AND CO.
Gray's Inn, London, W.C.1.

DECLINE OF TRADE

SIR,—Member after Member gets up, in or out of Parliament, and after praising his colleagues, laments the terrible condition to which the leading industries of the country have been reduced. Our shipping, as Mr. Amery tells us, is being swept off the seas by subsidised foreign competition. And speaker after speaker tells us that the weapon of the subsidy, used so successfully against us, is ready to our hand. The same argument is applied to shipbuilding. Not only are our shipowners ceasing to build, they are actually selling the ships they have to foreigners because they cannot get profitable employment for them; the goods are not there to transport. What folly, these critics tell us, when a mere trifle added to the Income Tax would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give all British ships so much per ton to ensure their competing successfully against the foreigner by accepting lower rates of freight and still there would be a dividend for their shareholders! Talk of midsummer madness! Was anything more insane ever suggested—and suggested by the very people who had brought it all about?

Their predecessors came into a glorious heritage in 1925. Our total imports and exports in terms of gold, which in 1913 were £1,404 millions had risen to £2,228 millions. They managed to fritter away that heritage, so that by 1931 the new protective policy had reduced the total to £1,228 millions. The usual quack remedies of the Protectionist party, sponsored by Mr. Baldwin (now Lord Baldwin) and Mr. Neville Chamberlain, had reduced the figures by 1935 to £743 millions. Is it any wonder that the shipowners found that they had no need for more ships, but on the contrary had already far too many?

But once more history has repeated itself. In a recent film, *Victoria the Great*, Sir Robert Peel is shown telling the House of Commons in the Hungry Forties how he had vainly tried to bring about prosperity by taxing every article in the schedule; he was now going to try Free Imports. Then began over 80 years of ever-increasing prosperity. At the end of last century Joseph Chamberlain, after being one of the ablest protagonists of Free Trade, suddenly joined the Protectionists and spent his declining years stumping the country on behalf of tariffs. He was followed from place to place by Lord Oxford (Mr. Asquith as he then was) who had little difficulty in convincing the country of the hollowness of Chamberlain's case, and our international trade went on mounting by leaps and bounds till, on the outbreak of the Great War, it was at the rate of nearly £1,500 millions per annum. After the Peace we had the phenomenal reinstatement figure of £2,357 millions in 1919 and in 1920, £2,625 millions. Normal progress was resumed in 1921 with £1,500 millions, in 1922, £1,663 millions, 1923 £1,864 millions, 1924 £2,014 millions, and the peak figure was reached in 1925 with £2,228 millions.

Then came the Slump period. The strenuous advocacy of the Baldwin and Chamberlain quack remedies, tariffs and quotas, reappeared and, notwithstanding formal pledges during the electoral campaign, heavy import duties were forced through Parliament by the so-called National majority in 1931. The remedy was worse than the disease; the 1931 total of imports and exports was £1,228 millions; in 1932 it had fallen to £803 millions, 1933 to £744 millions, 1934 to £729 millions and in 1935 to £743 millions. Is there any need to say more?

Glasgow. D. M. STEVENSON

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

SIR,—We have been interested in the articles which have appeared in your columns dealing primarily with the fate of the Oxford Electricity Bill in the House of Lords, but mainly with the position of holding companies in relation to electricity supply undertakings. Outstanding, from one point of view, is the quotation from Lord Meston that " it is the job of the Commissioners to look after the consumers' interests; the directors can look after the shareholders "—followed by the pertinent comment of your contributor that " in fact, there was no indication throughout the proceedings in the House of Lords that the Commissioners could protect the consumers at all."

After much inquiry and a surprising volume of experience we have reached the decided view that the interests of the consumers can be protected only by the consumers themselves. This implies no criticism of the Commissioners who, on the whole, are working well, within their powers. Those powers must necessarily be limited and, though the consumer may look to them for protection in certain defined cases, his main line of resistance must be his own vigilance and activity.

But the average consumer—and even the large consumer—knows little of the pitfalls of electricity supply and he takes no steps to seek disinterested advice. On a legal problem he consults his lawyer, on his Income Tax he engages an accountant; but where electricity supplies are concerned he merely accepts the word of the supplier, pays up and grumbles.

How many cases there are of individuals and firms who are over-paying it would be impossible to say. One firm which consulted us saved £1,200 a year thereby and another, on our action and advice, saved £800 in a dispute with its suppliers. Ours is a non-party, non-profit making organisation concerned only with the interests of the consumers and every day it is facing problems submitted to it by its members, among whom are some of the best-known firms and bodies in the country.

Your correspondent, noting the manner in which the Holding Companies are occupying the strategic positions, says that the only answer is a rebellion of consumers. Our opinion is that the consumers can do a great deal by combination and co-operation and that combination can be secured only through this Association.

Our activities must necessarily be limited by the degree of support which we secure from business houses, public bodies and individuals. If they would join us in such numbers that we could gain some equality of strength with the powerful and wealthy suppliers, then we could do much more. Our efforts can be aided materially if those who are concerned about the present

position and the dangers of the future will join us. At least we hope they will communicate with us as soon as possible.

The Electricity Consumers Association, Ltd., 46 Victoria Street, S.W.1.

H. ROLAND COOPER, Secretary

NATIVE LABOUR

SIR,—With reference to Dr. Norman Leys' letter entitled "African Unrest" in your number of June 11th, it would be interesting to know from what "official papers" he derived the information that labourers on South Rhodesian tobacco plantations received 5*s*.–8*s*. a month. Such is far from being the case. The general rates for adult native labourers are from 12*s*. 6*d*. to 15*s*., and in some instances 17*s*. 6*d*. and £1. In addition they are provided with food, and this includes provision for their families. In few instances have I found an adult male labourer receiving a wage as low as 10*s*. a month. A letter in a leading English paper stated that "the poor Rhodesian native is being slowly forced into unemployment"—whereas the very reverse is the case, and there is a decided shortage of farm labour, which I can assure Dr. Norman Leys would be still more acute were we to offer our native labourers 5*s*. to 8*s*. a month.

Banket, Southern Rhodesia.

GAVERICK A. FARMAR

WIRELESS IN CARS

SIR,—I find myself even more in agreement than usual with Y. Y. The months of July and August are peculiarly apt to breed unrighteous indignation, but no one can deny that his choice of objectives is impeccable.

It is not so much the disregard of the herring that rouses my sympathy—although a contributory cause to the choice of Norfolk for a holiday is the thought of those incomparable longshore bloaters, not chemically tanned to the colour of permanganate of potash, but gently cured in the aromatic smoke of an oak-bark fire—but rather the indignation, reaching the pitch of real anger, caused by wireless sets in cars. It is hard enough for anyone to be compelled, even in the country, to shut the windows on a hot summer evening against the noise of neighbours' wireless, but to have woods and commons within picnicking distance of London or any of the larger towns defiled in this way is an outrage which calls for a boycott of those makes of car thus fitted.

Recently a young woman of the more expensive kind was treating a slowly moving press of cars in Knightsbridge to the cacophony invariably chosen by these vandals. The driver of the bus in which I was travelling quite naturally had his attention momentarily deflected and had to pull up with excessive vigour to avoid a bump. It can only be presumed that perpetrators of this inexcusable offence are blind to the fact that the unusually penetrating timbre of "canned" music is a potential form of torture. Let them consider for a moment the rumour now going round that the Nazis have compelled Herr Schuschnigg to listen for hours at a time to the German radio propaganda or, according to another version, to a gramophone record of his last speech. The difference between such devilish torture and their offence is merely one of degree. In these days more than ever before it is necessary for us all to recognise the positive therapeutic value of quietness.

Pigeon Close, Chesham Bois, Bucks.

PHILIP JAMES

HERRINGS

SIR,—Apropos of "Y.Y.'s" interesting article in last week's NEW STATESMAN, it might interest your readers to know on the subject of the herring that the bones in cooking can be rendered innocuous by very simple treatment. Let the herrings be merely baked in a casserole or dish in a slow oven, adding to a little butter the juice of half a lemon—otherwise no liquid, and, lo and behold, in the space of a couple of hours the bones will have disappeared! Served later, preferably cold, with salad they make a delightful dish, the lemon somewhat abating the richness.

"Ranmore," St. Peters Hill, Caversham, Oxon.

J. A. SARGENT

We are glad to acknowledge the following further sums for Spanish Relief: Anon. (£2); M. J. G. Wilson (£1 1*s*.); Anon., G. E. Mayman, Marian Varco (10*s*); Anon., J. P. Le Quesne (7*s*. 6*d*.); F. S. Way (5*s*.).

Miscellany

"HAVE YOU GOT A CORK LEG TO SPARE?"

THE waiter leaned over my companion and whispered something. She smiled, he nodded and passed on.

"Drink that coffee quickly."

I gulped it down and, followed by the third member of our party, walked quickly out of the hotel.

"A trainload of wounded came over the Border last night," my friend explained. "Some are still in the hospital here."

"I'll get cigarettes." Hastily cramming packets into my pockets, I ran back to the car. The engine roared as we shot up the hill and raced along to the hospital on the outskirts of Perpignan. A limping Portuguese boy led us along a white-walled corridor.

"He was in there," my friend told me. "Got shot in the foot, so now he's here as an orderly."

The boy opened a door, standing aside for us to enter. A long, cool room, lined with cots, its window shutters were closed against the glare of the sun that found cracks, and made golden spears in the semi-gloom. Coming from the outside brightness, I shut my eyes tight to accustom them. I did not need to see that I was in a room filled with badly injured men. The smell of blood and old wounds told me. There were about twenty men there, some stretched out, half-dressed, on the beds, others sitting up smoking and talking in low tones. They all looked weary and exhausted, and those that still possessed eyes immediately looked at us. The boy orderly touched my arm and pointed to the first bed on the left. Lying on it was the battered wreck of a man. "Anglais," the boy said.

A stained bandage encasing his left arm up to the shoulder, the stump of his left leg protruded from his slit trousers. A piece of flannel was wrapped around it.

He was about forty, a week's growth of red-brown stubble framing his strained face. As we shook hands his grey eyes twinkled and a smile appeared on his fever-cracked lips.

"Are you English?" I asked.

"I am. Born in Camden Town." His voice held a trace of a Cockney accent.

"Long in there?" I inclined my head in the direction of Spain.

"Ever since it started."

"Where did you get that?" I glanced at his left arm.

"Teruel."

"It looks nasty."

"Yes," his smile momentarily vanished, "I am a bit of a mess."

"Take long to get to the Border?"

"We were in the train ten days. They gave us a good send-off last night. Bombed the train for three hours. They're rotten shots."

"How did you get wounded?"

He grinned. "Oh, bad luck. I'd been up in the front line for ninety days, and my clothes were dropping off me. We fell back to a farmhouse, and I found a heap of brand new clothes. I got a fine rig-out. New coat and breeches, clean shirt, and a fine pair of boots. I've never felt so well-dressed in all my life. Would you believe it," he continued, annoyance in his voice, "within an hour the boots were blown off my feet, the coat had nine holes in it, and the bone in my arm had torn a hole in the shirt. I thought luck like that couldn't last."

"How did you get into Spain?"

"Well, I was on a walking trip in France when the war broke out, and I joined up with some chaps who were going in. We climbed over the Pyrenees, and what a climb it was. Took us fifteen hours, ice and snow up at the top, and the wind was terrific. A hell of a journey, but we got in all right."

"So it seems," I remarked.

"I got my first packet at Madrid. See this." He pulled

up his right trouser leg, exposing jagged brown scars. "When I got to the hospital I found my younger brother there. I didn't even know he was in Spain."

"What do you intend to do now?"

"Well, if I can get fixed up, I'll try and get back in again. I know I won't be much use, but it's a grand country to be in. All the boys are crazy about it. The people are grand, especially the kids." Evidently they had not made that send-off strong enough, I thought. The man made a sudden slap at a horse fly. "Those damn things bite like the devil," he stated. "Say, is that an *Evening Standard*? I haven't seen a Low cartoon in months."

I left him and walked along the line of cots. A boy of around twenty was lying on his face as an orderly dressed his wound. Both cheeks of his posterior had been shot away. Next to him lay the shattered remnant of what had once been a man. His head was a ball of bloody bandages, his right arm was gone, and the bed-clothes were significantly flat where his right leg should have been.

A coloured man with soft brown eyes smiled weakly at me. I bent over him.

"No'th Ca'lina," he whispered in answer to my query. He was obviously too weak to talk, so I went on to where three men were watching me with animated eyes.

"'Lo there." They greeted me with smiles, and it struck me that most of these men were cheerful. God alone knows, they had little to be cheerful about, yet there was even a certain amount of outright laughter among them. I was about to return the conventional greeting of "How are you?" then stopped. It was quite obvious how they were.

"Like an English cigarette?" Their faces lit up, and they all smelled the cigarettes before lighting them.

"Where do you boys come from?"

One was a Canadian, and the other two came from the United States.

"Been in there long?" I asked the Canadian.

"About twelve months." He eased his plaster-encased leg into a more comfortable position. "This lousy cast is breaking to bits. I've had it on over a month."

"Going back to Canada?"

"I'd like to stop in England for a while if I could. I've got some relatives in London."

"No harm in trying, Tommy," said the American boy on his right. I looked at him. He was under twenty-five, with wavy brown hair and very white teeth. Except for dark smudges under his eyes and too pale skin he seemed all right.

"Where did you get hurt?"

His teeth flashed in a smile as he pulled down the bed-clothes. His right leg was gone at the thigh.

"Just outside Teruel."

"A bit tough, losing that."

He nodded. "It was quite an experience. But what the hell, it's gone. I'm not so badly off as some of the boys. Look at that German along there." He indicated the occupant of a bed opposite. "He's lost his eyes as well as a leg. Maybe I can get mine fixed up. Say, do you think I can get a cork leg in Paris?"

"I expect so."

"If I can, maybe I can get back in again."

"What, into Spain?"

"Sure, there's one or two chaps in there with artificial legs."

I was silent for a minute, then I asked about the coloured man.

"A grand boy," the Canadian told me. "And what a fighter! The best machine gunner we had in our company. A god-damn sniper got him through the lungs and we didn't find him for two days. The exposure gave him a touch of consumption, and coloured boys go fast when they get that. He had typhoid, too."

"Typhoid?"

"Sure, we all had it. Joe, here, and myself, we only just got over it in time to come out on this train."

At a bed further down the orderly was wiping the putty-coloured lips of a man. His face was ghastly, and I could see the upturned whites of his eyes.

"That chap looks very ill," I said.

"He's a Pole. A quiet sort of fellow, but a good scrapper. A bullet got him in the stomach, and gangrene set in. He won't last much longer."

It was time for me to go. I went along the line of beds, saying good-bye, and distributing the last of the cigarettes. I followed my companions through the door and turned to wave. The men waved back, smiling. I suppose I should have felt a deep pity for those men, but I did not. One does not pity greatness. I only felt humble.

DAVE MARLOWE

ALAS, POOR YORICK!

KATHERINE, who shares with me our old cottage, has warned me again and again that something must be done about the pond and the spring at the western end of our garden. Yes, we can now call our land a garden. Two years ago we should have been ashamed to make such a claim, for the tumble-down thatched hovel and the long-neglected plots of cabbage patch were a horror to look upon.

But we have laboured. We have worn the new handles of spades, forks, pick, and hoes to a smooth, billiard-ball surface. The rough metal of the tools has grown sword-keen and lovely under the oiling-rag. We have calloused our palms and sprung-up our lumbar muscles. Yet for nearly two years it seemed all in vain. A day, a week, a month of attack would make no inroad on the chaos of old cans, thistles, bindweed, nettles, loose-strife and ragged robin. The detritus of ages of cottagers gradually worked its way to the surface, and the more we dug and dragged the more we revealed; stuff that could not be burned, and that we dared not re-bury in the soil which was to become so famous for its roses and herbaceous borders and lawns. Bicycle parts, sauce bottles, remains of bedsteads, these formed the main phalanx of that army of flotsam and jetsam invading us from below.

That is now past history, however. Suddenly, the confusion subsided. I got up one morning, blear-eyed after a short night following an overdose of heavy labour on the previous day; I looked out of our bedroom window, and what I saw so amazed me that I neglected to greet the swallows nesting six inches from my head, under the thick thatch. There lay a garden; yes, a *garden*. It had grown overnight; for I had left the ground after dark, still with my heart heavy with lack of results, grumbling to Katherine that we should never do anything with that obstinate estate of three-quarters of an acre.

"Oh well," she said, "it's like washing up after a party. You begin surrounded with piles of crockery and knives and forks. You sort it out grimly, making no inroad. You begin to wash and to wipe. Still no effect. Then suddenly it is done!" Turning over with a groan (for she lay collapsed on the hearth-rug) she added laconically, "That's how it will be with the garden."

And it was: next morning! She has a gift that way, for immediate prophecy.

Under the morning sky, a pearly dove-colour, lay a level lawn bordered by a low brick drop-wall, leading to a flagged path winding between two large rose-beds, now gay with small violas and forget-me-nots. Under the nicely trimmed hedge along the front by the lane stretched the huge herbaceous border that was the pride of our hearts. Peonies, giant pansies, lupins and delphiniums (forgive this proud chronicle of the amateur gardener!) stood glistening with the low and level sunlight catching the underside of their petals so that they stood up like a modern still-life or a close-up from a Russian film glorifying the soil.

"It's come," I said, pouring out the morning cup of tea.

"What's come?" she said, sleepy and mystified.

"The garden."

"Stupid!"

"Well, it wasn't there last night. I remember thinking as we came in that we seemed to be making no progress at all. And now there it is. Something to be proud of. Why, the cottage looks different this morning, too; standing so neat and tidy with your brick path round its feet, and the lawn like a silk scarf."

"Well, now we can attack the pond. I've been itching to do that for months past. George is coming up to-day and he can wear your old gum boots. You've got your new ones."

So much for a practical woman.

We started after breakfast, I having previously broken the news to George when he arrived at seven o'clock. His large round face beamed, and he swung his arms like anticipatory flails.

"Thaa't be all right," he said, when I murmured something about the work being rather heavy and mucky. "I reck'n I loike a job loike thaa't. Don't reck'n pond's been cleerd these ten year'n. Thaa't's by my way o' reck'ning. Us'll dig her a bit deep'r while we be about it."

We began by trying to drain the water off. George dug a channel down at the deep end, cutting through to the brook. The water gurgled through the black mud and we helped it by cutting out osier roots, cress thickets and great patches of clay-embedded willow-herb and nettle. The surface of the pond sank five inches and then settled into a serene stillness. It was now on a level with the brook, and we should have to work through the water, groping for the mud.

It was wonderful mud: thick, black, with cuprous and metallic streaks of green and red. A rich odour of crushed thyme and mint rose from it. Indignant frogs leaped with a splash out of our spades into the water again. Gradually the dredging accumulated on the banks, crushing down the nettles and buttercups, creeping like lava back into the pond, insinuating its way into our boots, splashing over our skin, our hair, our clothes, until we looked like three tar-babies. George and I worked in the water; Katherine directed and laboured on the bank. Finally we decided that the time had come to drag with the huge three-prong rake borrowed from the farm at the lane-end. It was about twelve feet long, with a pole as thick as the sweep of a barge. George and I dragged together, I feeling that my internal organs were being whipped out of my body.

Deep sucking noises rose from the bed of the pond, followed by a rush of bubbles of carbonic acid gas as we lifted the thick layer of blue-black clay which had accumulated to a depth of about a foot over the clean pebbles which assured us that our pond was fresh spring-water. Up, too, leapt the released water from the depths. We could almost *hear* it gurgling up from the gravel sub-soil, and spreading in concentric rings over the surface of the pond, to lap against the edges like an incoming tide lipping at a sandy beach. It was a lovely, rich, and glorious sight. It had a sense of ritual about it, and we felt the symbolism of it stirring in our imaginations like poetry. At least, Katherine and I did. George, who had been born in the cottage, did not evince much poetic ecstasy. He went on dragging, perhaps grimly amused that I had let go of the pole and was leaving it to him. No doubt he felt that's the way townsfolk are.

Suddenly he dug in his heels, gripped the pole, and pulled until the veins stood out on his forehead. Nothing happened. Nothing moved. One minute; two minutes, his breath thickened, beads of sweat ran down his face. Then, with a deep gurgle from the bed of the pond, the rake dislodged a huge mass of clay and mud, which rose on the prongs like a pudding under a salad of weed and slime.

Together we dragged the burden to the bank, and as it subsided into a deliquescent mass, there rolled out of it a skull; a large, ebony-hued skull.

I picked it up, rinsed it in the water, and extricated the mud from the eyesockets. Two large teeth, like fangs, protruded from the jaw.

"Can it be prehistoric; some sort of baby mammoth?" I asked, handing it round for inspection. "Don't forget that we found the stone spear-head down here. This place is a happy hunting ground for paleolithic treasures. Preserved in this black embalming-paste through millions of years, while the tiny history of mankind unwinds . . ."

"Yon's a sheep," said George, wiping his head with a red handkerchief, and looking at me with a stare of stupid innocence.

"Of course it's a sheep," said Katherine, passing it back.

"Oh, well," I admitted, "at any rate, it's a black sheep!"

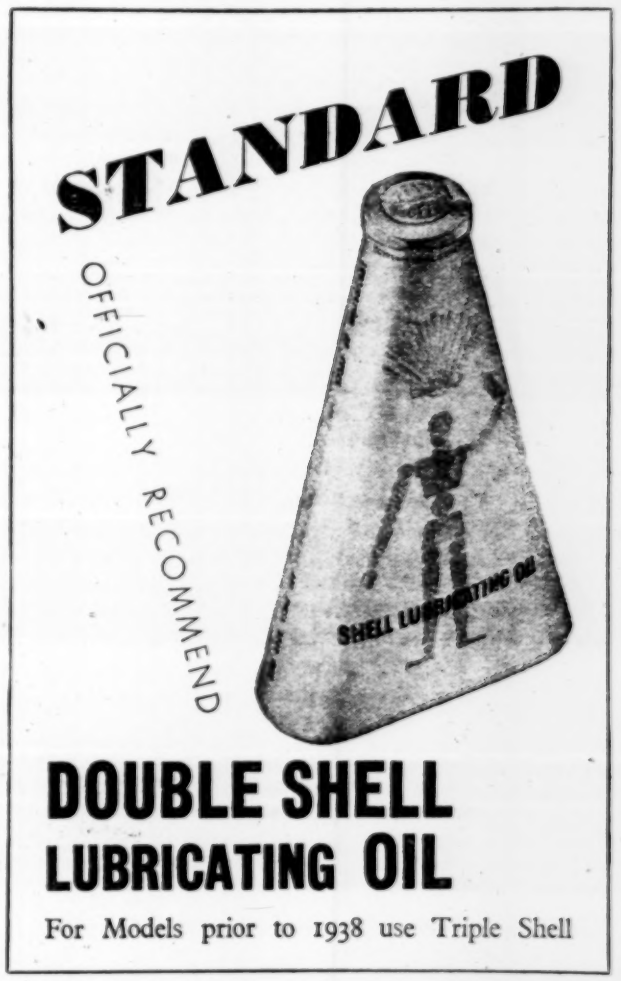
And I rolled it gently along the level lawn, reluctant to give up my theory and to return to the back-breaking battle against mud.

RICHARD CHURCH

THE MOVIES

"The Sheik," at the Carlton
"The Son of the Sheik," at the Leicester Square

To buy a seat to-day in a West End cinema is to bestride the saddle of Mr. Wells's Time Machine. I am not complaining. Time travel, like Continental travel, has its pleasures: the country may be dull, the roads lumpy, but one can always exclaim with insular disdain at the strange clothes and still stranger behaviour of the natives. Such exclamations are to be heard daily at the Carlton and the Leicester Square, where two of Rudolph Valentino's most famous films have been revived. The first one dates, I am told, from 1921; apart from an occasional old Chaplin, this is the farthest point yet reached in our backward journey, and the opportunity of seeing Valentino again is too valuable to be missed, whether by film-goer or by social historian. For Valentino is an important figure in twentieth-century mythology; he was the first, and remains perhaps the most potent, Male God of the screen. Before him there had been plenty of Goddesses; Pauline Frederick, Theda Bara, Lilian Gish contended strenuously for the golden apple, and Miss Pickford's innocent ringlets and white muslin frocks had



infected the world with a new Mariolatry. But the Valentino cult was more extensive and more hysterical than any of these; when he died, it was not a man but a god of fertility whom the mob mourned in that astonishing funeral; and to-day, years after his death, Valentino Associations still exist all over the world. Do these films explain the legend, or do they merely increase our stupefaction? On the whole, I think they explain it.

Of course, they are funny too. That passionate roll of the eyes has been copied all too closely by Groucho Marx. There are captions which would try the gravity of a judge, such as: "The Café Maure, where hips full of abandon made young men full of nonsense," or the villain's famous injunction: "Bring hither the white gazelle and guard closely the jealous one"; and when the hero fancies himself deceived by his girl he mutters: "Women! bah! I despise them; to-day's peach is to-morrow's prune." His words proved truer than he knew; the women date sooner than the men, not only in their plump, homely, unstreamlined features (and such hair too), but in the coy glances or proud head-tossings with which they receive their lover's protestations. When things have gone too far, and their lover is in no mood to wait, they cast anguished eyes to heaven, they wilt, they swoon. Every woman in the audience, even to-day, can see that the menace of their situation is a real one; and therein lies the secret of Rudolph Valentino's fantastic success, that he was positively the first handsome hero who looked as if he really meant business. Millions of women shrank from, and longed for, those ruthless caresses; for them he represented the spirit of pure, unencumbered sensuality. Even the accident of the silent screen was a help to him, not a hindrance, for glamour is more often dissipated than heightened by talk. Just as you can spot pornography by its neglect of all distractions, so the sex-film naturally tends to dilute its subject as little as possible. Now talk is, on the whole, a distraction from the serious business of sex; and real life is, as every lover knows, full of such distractions: hats fall off, telephones ring, it comes on to rain. Consequently the sort of romance which is the respectable equivalent of pornography loves to take its puppets far from the scenes of everyday life; to remote ranches, Caucasian palaces, blue lagoons. Here the virile hero can tame his lovely captive without distraction or fear of interruption; here the captive makes the delicious discovery that her screams will be of no avail. But since the gullible public must not guess the nature of its pleasures, at the last moment some misunderstanding is removed and both parties acknowledge true love; and it is well known that when it is a question of true love, consummation is no longer, even for an Arab chief, obligatory; it can wait.

If you want to see either of these historical documents I recommend *The Son of the Sheik;* its photography is much clearer, its story livelier, and it contains (unlike *The Sheik*) some intentionally comic relief which is still very funny. Also, if you enjoy derision, the appearance of Vilma Banky is even more extravagantly unfashionable than that of Agnes Ayres. But there is no need to be too superior about Valentino's glossy charms; we like our sheiks a trifle more matt, that's all; there has been a trend towards the pugilistic, butcher boy style (Clark Gable, say, or Robert Taylor) which hardly constitutes a change in taste (certainly not an advance), but merely a slight veering of the wind of feminine admiration. That the wind can still reach gale force the following little episode will show: I transcribe it *verbatim* from a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer publicity sheet:

> A sufficiently young and beautiful girl came to see us. She had spent, she said, a delightful day. Having seen the first morning show of *Three Comrades*, she found she could not decide whether she *adored* Bob more, or less, in this film than in the *Yank;* so she went next door to the Ritz, just in time to catch a performance of *Yank*. Still undecided, she came back to the Empire for another *Comrades;* thence to the Ritz for another *Yank*. Then she came to see us, and asked was this a record; and, as she had paid for her seat each time, and it had come rather expensive, could she please have passes for both theatres the next day? We have her name and address.

The only thing I miss in this story is the note of religious adoration; maybe the sound track has killed that for ever.

PETER GALWAY

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Nobilissima Visione," at Drury Lane

Massine's latest ballet is a sort of mimed presentation of the Life of St. Francis of Assisi, and was prepared by M. Massine with the collaboration of François Mauriac and Paul Hindemith, who has composed the music. The music, as one might have expected from Hindemith, who is one of the most distinguished of contemporary composers, is serious, expressive with a certain sober grace and an excellence of workmanship in a contrapuntal style which is appropriate to the subject. Massine also shows astonishing fertility of plastic invention, especially in the second, fourth and fifth tableaux, and his own performance as St. Francis is strikingly sincere and moving. Yet the ballet leaves one dissatisfied. This is partly owing to the decor by Paul Tchelitcheff. Some of the costumes are effective, and the artist has handled with skill the difficult problem of avoiding too many radical changes of scenery for the five tableaux, but what was wanted was a decorative synthesis in itself beautiful, appropriate and satisfying. Instead of a unifying act of imagination on the part of the scenographer there is a mere scattered ingenuity. It is clear that the more ambitious the ballet the more difficult it is to achieve this unity of music, decor and choreography. For example, in M. Massine's other new ballet, the slight but charming *Gaité Parisienne*, the synthesis between the Second Empire decor of Count Etienne de Beaumont, the music of Offenbach and the choreography of Massine is completely successful.

"The Captain's Lamp," at the Richmond Theatre

Mr. Norman Collins has written an old-style tragedy. The scene is a Provençal family in the France of 1870, and the theme the overpowering, gradually destructive tyranny of a father over his children. Captain Nicolet governs his family with an iron whim, in the name of discipline, courage, and the supreme duty of military sacrifice. When war breaks out with Prussia, he sends his upstanding army son, his timid bank-manager son, and his neurotic literary son to find death and mutilation at the Front, whilst he remains behind to bully their wives and endlessly recount his youthful exploits, until a highly effective but not wholly surprising *dénouement*. Essentially, this is a play of atmosphere, and the sense of almost O'Neilesque doom that hangs over its best moments must be put to the credit of Mr. William Devlin as Captain Nicolet. In his first few lines he conveys the endless, quiet-voiced nagging that has driven some of his family to semi-idiocy, but he also suggests, with little help from the author, the pitiable underlying fear that makes most bullies what they are. The part is too narrow to call for Mr. Devlin's best, but within the limits of a conventional type he gives a brilliant and satisfying performance. If Mr. Devlin gets full marks for interpretation, Miss Lilli Palmer, as the flighty Odette, walks away with the prize for what she has made of her part. With girlish charm and a thousand pretty tricks, she has made Odette's divinely self-righteous self-interest into almost the crux of the play, and stolen alike Mr. Devlin's thunder, and the audience's moral sense. The great merit of *The Captain's Lamp* is Mr. Collins' use of the mocked and misinterpreted unities. We hope the play will soon be presented a good deal further North-East.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, July 29th—
Bath Drama Festival. Till August 29th.

SATURDAY, July 30th—
Fabian Summer School, Dartington Hall, near Totnes, Devon. Till August 27th. Parties. from 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.
Festival of Old English Music. Cambridge. Till August 6th.

MONDAY, August 1st—
Drama Festival, Malvern. Till August 27th.
National Eisteddfod of Wales, Cardiff. Till August 6th.
"Twelfth Night," Open Air Theatre.
"The Silent Woman," The Playhouse, Oxford.
"Mariana," by F. G. Lorca, Barn Theatre, Shere.

THURSDAY, August 4th—
Recital of German songs by Elizabeth Schumann, New Burlington Galleries, 9.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

FRANK HARRIS'S *Oscar Wilde : His Life and Confessions* was published in New York twenty years ago, but the law of libel prevents its sale in this country. A highly respected publishing house has now produced it here, they explain, "with a few emendations which are now needed to prevent it misleading readers to whom the subject is new," in a volume called *Oscar Wilde*, by Frank Harris with a Preface by Bernard Shaw (Constable, 10s.). But to talk of "a few emendations" is a meiosis : I have compared this edition with the original, and find that not only have some eight thousand words been omitted, but a number of new statements and comments appear. Mr. Bernard Shaw is presumably responsible for these, since he claims to have cleared "this essentially truthful narrative from the errors which affected the justice due to living persons." I think that the reader is entitled to know, when reading a book purporting to be by Frank Harris, what parts of it if any have been written by another hand after his death. And in the new edition announced by the publishers, I hope they will indicate clearly such sentences and paragraphs as may be the work of Mr. Shaw. Most of the passages omitted represented Lord Alfred Douglas in an unfavourable light, and most of the new passages are very friendly to him ; in consequence the new version gives a very different impression from the original book. The publishers have acted properly as well as prudently in seeking to expunge all libellous statements. But the book remains untrustworthy. The dead cannot bring actions for libel, yet it is not only to living persons that, in Mr. Shaw's phrase, "justice is due." We are not warned that this biography is a particularly reckless example of what the French call a "vie romancée" : on the contrary, Mr. Shaw insists on Harris's "genuine hatred of falsehood as such." Moreover, Mr. R. H. Sherard recently wrote a book in which he exposed some of Harris's more conspicuous inventions. Mr. Shaw deals with this only by showing that some of Mr. Sherard's views are themselves wildly improbable. *Sherard says Harris lied : Sherard himself makes mistakes : therefore Harris did not lie.* This remarkable syllogism forms the implicit basis of Mr. Shaw's speech for the defence.

* * *

The difficulty of discovering the truth about historical events even so recent as the Wilde trial is evidently enormous. Here is one example. On page 197 of this new version Harris describes a conversation between himself and Wilde.

> "Why on earth did Alfred Douglas, knowing the truth, ever wish you to attack Queensberry ? "
>
> "He's very bold and obstinate, Frank," said Oscar. "He thought he could give the jury such an account of his father that a verdict in his favour would have been impossible."

The last twenty-three words do not appear in the 1918 edition : is it Mr. Shaw who now puts them into Wilde's mouth ? But we find Mr. Shaw in his preface saying "Wilde allowed Robert Ross to persuade him to prosecute the Marquess without consulting Lord Alfred." Evidently it is not now a matter of very great importance to know who, if anyone, gave mistaken advice to Wilde, but I think we are entitled to invite an editor at least not to contradict himself. Moreover, in order to be just to Lord Alfred Douglas, is it really necessary to be unjust to Robert Ross ? But Mr. Shaw goes out of his way to give an insulting account of the unfortunate Ross, who is not alive to defend himself. All this pother about who said what may seem tedious, for, as Mr. Desmond MacCarthy remarked in attacking this book, "respect for truth is under the weather." In the Totalitarian States history is being written with an ostentatious contempt for the facts, and the "historical" films produced in America and England are packed with deliberate misrepresentations. I find it hard to understand how Mr. Shaw can call Harris's book "essentially truthful," when he has himself been busy editing it by putting in contradictions of dozens of Harris's statements. And I think his love of paradox goes a little too far when he suggests that Mr. MacCarthy and others who object to Harris's inventions should purchase the copyright of this book and withdraw it at their own expense. How convenient if anyone in need of cash had only to publish a pack of lies in order to be bought off by those so old-fashioned as to care for the truth !

Harris had many of the gifts of a novelist, and parts of his book are very vivid. But the man to whom above all he is unjust—and he has the grace to admit it—is Wilde himself. To see how inferior his reports of Wilde's conversation are to the original, one has only to compare them with the enchanting letter from Wilde to Ross on p. 260. Elsewhere Harris pays tribute to the extraordinary charm of Wilde's talk, but from this letter we get some notion of its real nature. He had a genius for gay, delicious nonsense. (Just after leaving prison he wrote "Reggie Turner is staying here under the name 'Robert Ross,' Robbie under the name 'Reginald Turner.' It is better they should not use their own names.") But Harris prefers to invent conversations in which Wilde blethers with most improbable solemnity about boys being more beautiful and more unselfish than girls.

* * *

Oscar Wilde is now somewhat underrated, I think. His vulgarities are particularly offensive to us, his best epigrams (and how good they are !) have become as familiar as proverbs, but even in his worst prose-works among the pinchbeck there is much that is genuinely dazzling, and *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a masterpiece, the most exquisitely entertaining farce that has ever been written. Apart from this, Wilde is important, I think, chiefly as a philosopher—which sounds absurd, as his intellect was not powerful or his ideas original. But he did more than any other man to destroy Victorianism. (It was years later that the attacks of Butler, Shaw and Wells became effective.) Pater indeed expounded a similar esthetic philosophy, but he did so in a manner too prim to be contagious. Wilde was also influenced by Disraeli, Matthew Arnold, Whistler, and such French writers as Gautier, Baudelaire and Huysmans, but the result, half wisdom, half silliness, blew like a gale through the Victorian drawing-rooms, carrying away a ponderous accumulation of stuffy upholstery. We are now bored by the triviality with which he dismissed all connection between art and morality, but one has only to compare Balzac with Dickens (who was probably not his inferior in talent) to see the loss entailed by a mistaken view of this connection. It is just because Wilde has been so successful a missionary that we can now afford to neglect him. But every artist, writer and critic owes him gratitude—even Mr. Shaw, I think, would have enjoyed less success if Wilde had not previously proselytised the public.

* * *

The man himself remains acutely interesting. He was a snob, his culture was superficial (though he was a respectable classical scholar), his taste was often lamentable, and his conversation, also, exists now only in the memory of a few friends. He was full of fancy, exceptionally kind-hearted, and quite different from anyone else. His disasters came evidently from his sensuality, but some very successful men have been little less discreet and no less self-indulgent. If he had not crossed the path of Lord Queensberry he might have continued for many years his triumphant career as a playwright. He might even, it is curious to think, be alive to-day and we might be looking forward to a new play from him at the Malvern Festival. For he was born only two years earlier than Mr. Shaw. The careers of these two Dubliners, who were almost contemporaries, can evidently be made to yield a most edifying moral. How dismal the end of the sensualist, how triumphant the old age of the ascetic ! But the interest still widely excited by Byron suggests a disquieting possibility. Can it be, perhaps, that a hundred years hence the writings of both Wilde and Mr. Shaw will be outmoded and neglected, but men will still be fascinated by the reprobate's character and tragic story ?

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE OPEN FIELDS

The Open Fields. By C. S. and C. S. ORWIN. *Oxford.* 21s.

What agricultural history needs, as R. H. Tawney himself has said, is not more documents so much as thicker boots. The Orwins, the Director of the Institute of Agricultural Economics at Oxford and his wife, have found and used plenty of documents, but they have also walked many fields. One thing that makes their book ring true and taste fresh as few books do, is that it is built up round the living image, rooted in the soil, of the one surviving English village in which the fields are, in almost the full medieval sense, "open." This is the village of Laxton, in Nottinghamshire. In Laxton the manor court still functions, the church bell still rings when the stubbles are broken, the first sheaf of the year is still laid by the village parson on the altar, seed is still broadcast on the tilth, stray stock still driven to the pinfold by the pinder, fallow-jacks still graze on sikes, and mearstones and boundary-stakes still distinguish holding from holding. A village lad can still work his way up from a job on a neighbouring estate, through a cottage holding of cornland which gives him, with his first harvest, the purchase price of his first twenty sheep, to a 100 or 200 acre farm of his own. In 1887, the Laxton jury presented the Duke of Portland for "leading soil from the Commons": (his keepers wanted ant-eggs for his young pheasants) and the Duke was fined 5s.

The Orwins know Laxton in and out: they can quote a Laxton man's own account of how he did once and only once unload manure on his neighbour's land in mistake for his own, when the whole field was deep in snow. They illustrate their book with photographs, taken by themselves, of Laxton folk and beasts, ploughlands and closes, and one of their purposes in writing it has been to leave on record a description of a village which is strong in the opinion that Open Fields have served and still can serve it well.

Laxton, too, has done more than provide them with a working model of open-field husbandry. Behind its present practice lies a long history, which has already been the subject of some careful research by others, much of which can be traced back to Domesday Book and beyond, and some of which is illustrated with exceptional fullness by a truly magnificent set of manorial records. These are preserved in the muniment room at Thoresby, the seat of the family which has provided the lords of Laxton manor for nearly three hundred years. Of these records the most important are three. First, the great Map or "plat" drawn on sheepskin to a scale of eight inches to one mile and decorated with charming little scenes of sport and farming—hunting, hawking, reaping, ploughing, stallions kicking, the ploughman with his plough, the shepherd with his sheep, each in his right place on the map, wherever space allows—the whole great panorama the work of one Mark Pierce, who completed it in 1625. On it are "delineated with great accuracy and detail, not only every house, building and enclosure of the manor, but also (duly numbered) every strip of ploughland in the Open Fields and every dole of grassland in the meadows." Second, the Terrier, by the same hand, in which is given a description of each parcel of land shown on the map, with its owner, occupier and exact acreage. Both the Map and the Terrier are reproduced complete in this book, the former, which is not well enough preserved to be photographed, from a faithful tracing, half scale, made especially for the purpose. Third, an almost unbroken run of the Laxton Manorial Court Roll from 1651 to the present day. This, perhaps the most valuable of the three, forms a detailed record of both the farming practice and the administration of the manor over nearly three hundred years and a notable illustration of how the two sides of village life dovetail into each other. In its bye-laws, its list of "pains" and its jury presentments of breaches of rules, it covers the whole field of husbandry and shows how its routine was maintained and regulated (for it was always subject to frequent change), not by outside authority, but by the village democracy itself. "Amid all the great social inequalities of the times the principle upon which life and work in the Open Fields was based was the principle of the same law for all. In the practice of agriculture, the lord and the people were, all of them, equal." The Duke of Portland duly paid 5s. for his ants' eggs.

This is evidence which does not need thick boots for its collection. But it yields its full measure only to those who know farming from the inside. To watch the Orwins at work upon it in Chapters VIII to XI of this book is a revelation of what knowledge, sympathy, and understanding can do to re-create that most elusive element in the past—the life of common men.

It was Laxton, its Map, its Terrier and its Court Roll, no doubt, which brought to a head the obstinate questionings about that "multitudinous muddle of little unfenced bits of land" all over the big manorial fields, which have long vexed or amused the Director of the Institute of Agricultural Economics, and the author of *Farming Costs*. Every schoolboy knows about the Open Field System and has studied a diagram of it. But how did it happen? And how did it work? "Given a block of two or three thousand acres of land to-day, lying irregularly round a village, there is no farmer in the kingdom, and very few land agents or surveyors, who could divide it into fields, furlongs and strips (with easy access both for men and horses, by road, by paths, by balks, by headlands to every strip in the manor) as was done as a matter of course by the farmers of nearly 2,000 years ago."

Constitutional historians do not give much help. Take Maitland's "obvious answer" to the question "Who laid out our English fields?" That answer is, "They were laid out by men who would sacrifice economy and efficiency at the shrine of equality." But man, the Orwins remind us, is a hungry, before he is a political, animal. A field, too, as the wearers of thick boots know, is a highly artificial and precarious product of man's will, ingenuity and muscle in unending struggle with Nature: it has to be painfully made out of wood, water and wild grass, before much can be done by way of laying it out. A man who, faced with the task of wringing a livelihood for himself and his folk out of a patch of wild scrub, began by undertaking a survey of some hundreds of acres in order to partition them equally between himself and hisf ellows, would indeed make a sacrifice at the shrine of equality, for he would certainly starve.

The obvious answer, then, is more likely to be concerned with tools than with ideas, with the lie of the land and the need to get to it and keep it drained, than with a passion for social equality. The Orwins, anyhow, start with the plough, its hungry ploughman and its ox team. But even these have to wait till a good patch of land is cleared of scrub. Then the men can go to work, as near the village as may be, and set out a day's ploughing for each plough team side by side. At the end of that day's work each team will have ploughed its "land," more or less, according to the nature of the ground and the length of the furrow. Next day, the plough teams move on in the same order to the next unploughed piece of clearing, do a day's work there, and so on to the end of the season. "So, at the finish, every man would have land ready for sowing which consisted not of a compact field or group of fields, but of a number of narrow strips, each of one or more "lands" making up a day's plough-work and each of them divided from the next by those of his neighbours." Here is no sacrifice of efficiency and economy, but the exact reverse. The Orwins' ploughman knows his business and gets on with it in the most convenient, or the only possible, way. Maitland's, it is hardly too much to say, is a suicidal fanatic.

This is but one example of a method used throughout this enquiry. As the argument develops, it accumulates more and more evidence to show that the Open Field System was based on thoroughly sound and flexible agricultural principles. Given the strictly limited means with which the medieval farmer worked, it is not easy to see how he could have got more food value for time spent.

What gives the book its outstanding importance as a contribution to economic history is that it treats an agricultural subject from an agricultural standpoint. Enough has now perhaps been said to show that this book has something to give to everyone who cares about the life of the people on the land. There is something masterly about the way in which it combines so much rich detail and intricate description with a range over the whole record of English agriculture from the first clearing of the scrub to to-day's mechanised farming. Many years of thought about and care for the agricultural population and its problems have gone to its construction, and its argument, never obtruded but all the more irresistible for that, is that what agriculture once did it could do again.

The Open Fields as they are interpreted in this remarkable book stand for a determined and continuous effort to make the land serve the needs of the people. Nothing that has taken their place has done their work so well. To quote the Orwins' final word, "we should not forget what rural England has lost, in economic opportunities for the people and in their social education, by the destruction of the system of which Laxton, to-day, is the sole surviving example."

KENNETH BELL

A SYMBOLIC BOOK

Dancer in Madrid. By JANET RIESENFELD. *Harrap.* 10s. 6d.

It is extremely seldom that one can recommend a book to everybody, and it is extremely pleasant when one can. Once before this year I found a book, a novel, for which I was able to do the same, but in this respect *Dancer in Madrid* is almost the critic's ideal. I can think of no one, except the very stupidest Fascist, who would not enjoy reading Miss Riesenfeld's account of her adventures.

One of the chief reasons why it is difficult to write well, or even readably, is because part of one is always rebelling, imperceptibly, against what another part believes to be the truth. In the case of non-professional writers, like Miss Riesenfeld, a lack of experience in outwitting themselves on this point nearly always leads to books which are boring and bad because they consist, very largely, of a kind of unconscious but quite recognisable lying. Sometimes it is not even lying, but simply mumbling. Here, however, the author is one of those infinitely peculiar people who are able to take a pen for the first time and put down what *really* happened to them, during six months of their life.

The American daughter of an eminent Viennese musician, she had trained herself as a Spanish dancer, and she arrived at the frontier of Spain, alone, at the age of twenty-one. It was late July, 1936. "Work and love," as she says herself, were her only incentives. She was on her way to Madrid to fulfil her theatrical contracts, and to marry Jaime, the director of a large travel bureau and the son of rich Catalonian parents. He had been engaged to her six years before, in Hollywood, where he had won, by accident, a film contest for the handsomest man in Spain. On the day she arrived at Hendaye, the Fascist rebellion began, and she was refused an entry. An American journalist helped her to reach Madrid, via Barcelona, and thereupon began the existence about which it is so fascinating to read, the transformation of a non-social mind into a social one. On the first day at her new ground-floor flat, the author tried out some steps in the court-yard, whereupon the entire block leaned out of their windows and yelled approval. This was her introduction to the community. At night, she was continually disturbed by the sound of single shots in nearby streets, and when she asked about them she discovered what the Fifth Column meant. Jaime seemed unaccountably cold towards those friends she made among the leading Republican journalists and artists, and he began to have mysterious interviews about which she was not encouraged to ask questions. Unfortunately it is impossible, in a short review, to do more than hint at the variety of conversations and incidents, so simply and convincingly told, which gradually deepened her uneasiness at Jaime's behaviour, and brought her to give her services as a dancer at benefits for the Governmental cause. One of the most celebrated Madrid journalists told her this:

> The Church has become a heavier and heavier burden on the people. There is one priest for every nine hundred persons, whereas in Italy, the seat of the Catholic Church, there is only one priest for every twenty thousand . . . also, there has never been an army in the world which has demanded so large a portion of the national income. The officers practically formed a caste system. We had eight hundred generals more than you have in America, a country forty times as large; there was one officer to every nine soldiers.

Then there is an extraordinarily touching account of one of the benefit performances. A white-haired couple, stage favourites of the previous Madrid generation, came to speak:

> "For many years Lauretta and I have entertained your fathers, your mothers, even your grandfathers. We are as much a part of old Madrid in the memories of your parents as the carriages in the Bombilla or the bustles and *mantones de Manila* the ladies used to wear; La Verbena de la Paloma; everything that was *el Madrid castizo*—the pure Madrid—of fifty years ago."
>
> He paused. The audience was quiet, everyone straining to hear his words.
>
> "Lauretta and I never planned to make another appearance after our retirement some years ago. But to-night we have come, not in any professional capacity, but simply to tell you that we of another day are with you . . ."

It was at the same performance that Alberti announced the Fascist murder of Lorca, the greatest poet in Spain.

Miss Riesenfeld saw the first bombing of Madrid, and the reply of the first Government airplanes. Her flat suddenly became the home of a quiet lady dressed in black, deposited by Jaime, and then one day the lady was removed, and shot. She was carrying munitions to the men who disturbed the author's sleep. This was the prelude to the death of Jaime, and Miss Riesenfeld's departure from Spain. And now, in her preface, she says of herself:

> I belong to no faction. I am only one of the vast and growing army of liberals who are coming out of their corners and beginning to face the facts of the actual world . . .

It is the story of a woman whose heart was not her own, but whose mind was. She was open-minded, and she chose as the open-minded, to-day, must choose.

BRIAN HOWARD

A MODERN ROMANTIC

The Carnival. By FREDERIC PROKOSCH. *Chatto and Windus.* 5s.

The author of *The Shropshire Lad* in the famous lecture on The Name and Nature of Poetry, which set the pundits and academic coteries by the ears, remarked that most poetry is composed of ingredients other than poetry and that it is from these other ingredients that many readers derive their chief enjoyment. The poetic essence cannot be defined; it can only be described in terms of physical reaction and response. Mr. Prokosch is a newcomer, a dark horse, in the hot race for Apollo's laurel which has apparently so many eager and knowledgeable spectators at the present time. Even the popular press is quite concerned with the "form" of our Audens and Spenders. Backers and bookies abound inside the universities and out. Mr. Prokosch, thank heaven, is not determined to be "contemporary"; hence the favour he finds with more senior poets, critics and readers. For Mr. Prokosch is determined to be a poet and the other ingredients of modern verse interest him little. Of course the familiar note sounds from time to time:

> Let the crimson pyjamas flower on all the beaches (XXII)

and

> the brusque and hasty
> Phrases of aunts, the embraces of sisters,
> The solace of music, the adored indifferent
> Kiss of the dark on the thousand desires of the ugly.
>
> This is the hour of disguises. The small and unwanted
> Reflect on the coming of diamonds and kisses,
> On yachts, on balls, on the maid's lucky wedding
> And America. (XXXII vi.)

and

> Then there was Zaharoff:
> He had a weasel's mind . . . (XVII)

But Mr. Prokosch is not one of "the gang" who with all their diverse gifts can remind us on occasion of Vining and Young Woodley and the Prefect's Study. His work brings to mind the volumes of poetry (not a few) which the present writer had the privilege of noticing for the *Nation and Athenaeum* in the twenties. Poetry which was richest if most difficult in Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell, some of whose admirers feel that he has found in his romantic prose a more responsive medium; easier and more lyrical, if somewhat tenuous and faint, in Mr. W. J. Turner; a little too easy and accomplished and glib in Mr. Humbert Wolfe. Mr. Prokosch is in their tradition. He is aware of that bugbear of our literary critics and students, "the contemporary situation," only so far as Arnold was aware of the disease of modern life with its sick hurry and divided aims. The problem is not for him what it was for Hardy, and is perhaps (or was) for Mr. Eliot. We read Mr. Prokosch side by side with Emily Dickinson, of whom he frequently reminds us, or Mr. Sassoon, with whose temperament one feels he has real affinities. *The Carnival* then is the harder to review, just because it has a seed and promise of poetry proper, a taste of the essential ingredient which moves us physically, and so much less of the obscure symbols, private jokes and high-minded propaganda which excite analysis and disputation in contemporary verse.

> Music, when soft voices die,
> Vibrates in the memory;
> Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
> Live within the sense they quicken.

It is this vibration which some readers still seek and some will find in Mr. Prokosch. He does not as yet create

> Forms more real than living man,
> Nurslings of immortality.

It is a vibration, momentary and indefinable. As Lady Bracknell's niece remarked: "The name Jack has positively no vibrations."

(Mr. Prokosch looks over his shoulder at the nineties; for example *Sibyl* XV.) I find it in the line

Music, the lion, the legendary day. (XXXIII)

and elsewhere. It is more complicated than the pure poetry of "the viol, the violet and the vine" school, although the Poe-Baudelaire tradition is the thread which leads to Mr. Prokosch rather than the Donne-Hopkins descent. He is not a wit but something of a dreamer. Not a disciple of Donne and Dryden, of *The Dunciad* and *Don Juan*, but spellbound by Prospero and Comus and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*; the medieval dream, the Victorian dream within a dream. He is a dreamer but not, as yet, a visionary. He is in the Chamber of Maiden Thought "intoxicated with the light and the atmosphere." Although he writes of "a wilderness of terror and desire," of "suffering's unexhausted well," of "those ravenous twins desire and power," he lacks passion. He is with Emily Dickinson, not with Emily Brontë. He does not glut his sorrow on a morning rose. His verse is still an Attic shape, a fair attitude, with brede of marble men and maidens overwrought. He does not know the aching forehead and the parching tongue. His abundance of imagery, his verbal felicities betray him. He looks upon fine phrases as a lover. Love, he says in one of his poems, is strangled with words. So also is poetry. He is a poet of words. We have the double epithet; star-littered lakes, hawk-haunted dunes, foam-lipped Cyclades. We have the happy adjective; hinting smiles of daybreak, panther eyes, the Seine with her grieving beeches, that casual knifing beauty, sensitive fernlike faces, the whittling sailor, tacit night. We have the unfamiliar word; basilica, persimmon, nevadas, scimitar, condors, dolphin and dragon; and of course the proper name; Toledo, Aragon, Castile, Nineveh and Tyre, Orion, Sagittarius, Aldebaran. Above all and in abundance the surprising metaphor, the ambitious simile, the farthest-fetched image; the blond assassin sprung from his mother's cradle, a nun drowned in a stream, dactyls of engines, the senility of the Tuscan castle, whales in their gigantic bliss, the sheep are flowers tossed on the field, ivy along the marble ignorant limbs of the strong, the tender.

These are some of the flares and fireworks and streamers of Mr. Prokosch's Carnival. He wears his domino with a difference and responds more to the wistfulness of Pierrot than the gaiety of Harlequin. As Pierrot pursues butterflies, he pursues images. Words enmesh him. True, he speaks of

Songs in whose web our simple hearts are woven,

but his web has too many dyes, the design is confused. He writes songs, but the singing note, "the celestial tune," is now muffled in excess, now orchestrated into singularity. It is, like all instruments, seldom a lonely flute. There is not "that Doric delicacy in his Songs and Odes" of the master-musician. If intensity compels simplicity, if imagination routs fancy, if the inward ear is attuned more subtly to the ditties of no tone, then the poetical, with which he is so lavish, will become (we hope and believe) a poem.

GEORGE RYLANDS

A RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENTS

From Tsardom to the Stalin Constitution. By W. P. and Z. K. COATES. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

This is a useful survey of Russian development for those who want a bird's-eye view of the last twenty years without any profound scrutiny of the graver issues involved. Mr. and Mrs. Coates belong to the class of enthusiasts who see no spots on the sun. Their picture, accordingly, is painted in roseate colours, and the problems are hardly touched at all. They have no difficulty in showing that there has been immense progress in public health, education, and economic well-being. That the condition of the average Russian citizen is, from any angle, better than in the days of the Tsar is beyond dispute. The price of the achievement has been a heavy one; but that has been the case with every emancipation of similar magnitude.

The least satisfactory chapters are those on the intelligentsia and on the trials. The problem of the "disease of orthodoxy," as the Webbs call it, is not seriously met by quoting some scattered eulogies from a few well-known writers and scientists. And while it is difficult not to agree with Mr. and Mrs. Coates that the defendants in the trials were engaged in acts against the Government which were objectively counter-revolutionist, it is difficult, too, not to feel that there was also involved in the trials a struggle for power within the Communist Party which magnified differences of doctrine far beyond the proportions of reason. There are matters to which Mr. and Mrs. Coates do not refer that are of great importance. How many people have been sentenced to death or imprisonment over doctrinal differences? How many people have been deported or sent to concentration camps without trial? Why is it that the relatives abroad of arrested persons can get no information about their fate? That the enemies of the Soviet Union have engaged in conspirational action against it is certain; that its leaders have been wise to check those activities before they became a threat to the safety of the State is obvious. But there are grave issues of procedure surrounding the whole problem with which Mr. and Mrs. Coates do not squarely deal. They would have helped the friends of the Soviet Union by facing them frankly instead of assuming that they do not exist. A good deal of the same argument applies to their account of the constitution. On paper, it is an admirable instrument. But it is obvious that the leaders' sense of insecurity has, so far, prevented any frank and full implementation of its principles.

Mr. and Mrs. Coates write as though it is already fully in being. That is not the case. It is intelligible that this should be so, for a State like the Soviet Union is still beset by enemies on every side. Until we have reached a new epoch of stability in international relations, the tolerance that is born of security is no more likely to emerge in the Soviet Union than elsewhere. Stalin and his colleagues have accomplished a remarkable work. In doing so, they have been ruthless in handling their opponents to a degree that it is not always possible to defend. I think the writers of this book would have been wiser to recognise this in its proper perspective rather than assume, as they have assumed, that all is white, on one side, and black on the other. The achievement they have to record is sufficiently remarkable without the postulate that the Soviet Union is not subject to the errors and blunders that are characteristic of government as such.

H. J. LASKI

RAINER MARIA RILKE

Rainer Maria Rilke: Later Poems. Translated from the German with an Introduction and Commentary by J. B. LEISHMAN. *Hogarth Press.* 10s. 6d.

Rilke is a poet not easily appreciated except by those who have in themselves something of his own ardour and spiritual intensity, especially in an age nervously preoccupied with problems of human organisation and impatient of all transcendentalism. His life and work were rapt in a longing to find the intimate meaning of man's existence. His mystical conception of life and death, his translation of the elated beauty and bitter inadequacy of the world into the language of his own spirit and its deep yearnings make much of his poetry a panorama of lonely experiences difficult for some modern temperaments to comprehend. While life runs turbid and troubled and men concern themselves too much with the prosecution of material desires and even the indulgence of tribal passions, this poet watches for the splendours of a spiritual reality which will bring him into communion with the eternal and divine. A body of interpretative criticism is growing up around his work, as devoted readers find in him extensions of the soul which light up a special realm of mystic experience, and while it is better to believe that he gives us a true expression of his own poetic nature rather than a true description of the universe, the strange pilgrimage of his inner life is reflected and communicated in great and noble poetry.

The *Later Poems* illustrate many of his qualities, for as well as poems which reveal the predominant, passionate, mystical illumination of his mind, there are others, very similar to the *Neue Gedichte* published in 1907 and 1908, in which he is attempting to achieve the self-sufficient, objective quality which had become part of his artistic ambition through his admiration for Rodin. There are poems about love and about nature, about night in its symbolic force for his imagination, and in several appears his famous image of the Angel, the terrible yet comforting being who "vouches for the recognition of a higher degree of reality in the invisible." And there are included the wonderful "Five Songs: August, 1914," which express the overwhelming impact of the "hearsaid, remote, incredible War God," on his extreme sensibility and the anguish of his striving to reconcile his fear of the destruction and cruelty of war with his hope—a main thread of his philosophy—that such suffering would ultimately bring humanity nearer to God.

National hatreds are now so rife in the world that one turns

with a brief reassurance to the kindly office of the translator. Mr. Leishman deserves a grateful tribute. With the help of the Hogarth Press he has already made three volumes of translations from Rilke, and he now adds his fourth to the increasing number which are bringing this fine genius within the ken of those who have no German. It has been no simple or straightforward occupation, for patience, skill and determination are needed to attempt to give in English a version of Rilke which one who honours his mind and extraordinary metrical brilliance will not be uneasy to put forth. The *Späte Gedichte*, published posthumously in 1934, which Mr. Leishman has here translated, is the most comprehensive of varying aspects of Rilke's poetry issued, and for those already acquainted with him and perhaps still more for those who wish to begin to know him, this publication will be of great value. It has been arranged into eight sections, to each of which the translator has given a title indicating its contents, and in addition to his introduction he has included a commentary which, by quotations from the poet's letters and extracts from memoirs written by his friends, offers great help in the understanding of the poems themselves and gives insight into the ideas and experiences which were the source of his poetry. His notes on the poet's attitude to Christianity, to love, to the War will add greatly to the usefulness and merit of his work.

The translations themselves have been made with care and fidelity, and if they are not consistently suggestive in expression, they have the seal of trustworthiness and are a conscientious effort to present Rilke undistorted.

H. M. KEYES

QUILL OR MASHIE?

The ABC of Authorship. By URSULA BLOOM. *Blackie.* 3s. 6d.

Family Golf. By ELEANOR E. HELME. *Dent.* 5s.

"Why not give up writing and do something *sensible*?" asks Ursula Bloom, a writer whose name I see advertised on London buses and whose cheery little stories I remember in *Home Notes*. "Why not?" she goes on, in her provocative way. The answer comes thundering through in the next paragraph.

> Because in the heart of every creative artist, there is the lust and the fever and the torch to light the path into the future. Because the very sight of the street of adventure and the sound of the presses set the heart blood racing. Because the smell of ink is a good smell, and the journalistic jargon is good jargon, and because news is news . . .
>
> You feel that way, too?
>
> I'm glad.

I can't say I am. I don't. I believe I have lost my heart to Mollie Stokes, who wriggles so winningly into my confidence right in the first sentence of Miss Helme's book *Family Golf*.

> "Mums, how soon shall we get to Scotch Corner?" Mollie Stokes wriggled forward as well as she could from amongst the suit cases and golf-clubs which shared the back seat of the car with her, with her brother and the wire-haired terrier.

Ursula Bloom is a clergyman's daughter. Mollie Stokes is a Commander's daughter Ursula Bloom loves note-books, Mollie loves ponies, when she isn't playing golf. The two worlds of these two creative artists, the one creative with the pen, the other with the number 3 iron, are so different that the choice is easy. In the world of Ursula Bloom it is the earning capacity that counts. First there are the typewriter, the carbon and the good quality typing paper (because the continual refolding of a returning MS. spoils bad quality paper and makes the next editor suspicious) and then there is only half a crown for a poem.

Here are some samples of the type of verse which the ordinary magazine wants to buy:

> Such little things make up a home,
> The gingham curtains, cups of blue,
> The dresser which crisp china shows
> The smell of toast, the well-loved view.

That, I feel, was written early on in a bed-sitter in far, far West Kensington, or, perhaps, even at the Rectory itself. Then the bed-sitter is a larger one, nearer the beloved "street." She tells you how to get on with editors. "If you are a woman, remember that no editor is out for a flirtation." Study the likes and dislikes of editors. Ursula Bloom keeps a note-book about them.

> For instance, opening the pages at random, I come to my description of a certain editor whom you all know very well by name.
>
> Dotes on flowers, particularly carnations, which she grows.
>
> Loves the country.
>
> Likes to be right in her opinion and dislikes argument.

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To have healthy nerves should not be a subject for personal congratulation, any more than is cleanliness. It is a solemn and sacred duty—and it is within everyone's reach. To have calm and healthy nerves is a husband's duty to his wife, a wife's duty to her husband, parents' duty to their children.

"In the present state of medical knowledge.."

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'Sanatogen' is a tonic *food*, containing no drugs or stimulants. It will not give you merely a *momentary* lift, a passing sensation of health: the good it does is permanent. 'Sanatogen' nourishes and repairs worn nerves. It builds strong red blood corpuscles to give you new strength, new energy. By keeping you always at the razor-edge of fitness it provides the one sure protection against illness—radiant, vigorous health.

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M & C

Does not say what she means about plots, but believes that she does.
Has a weakness for spaniels.
Is not interested in life abroad.
Suffered a sad loss in an unhappy love affair, so avoid such subjects in stories.

And when an editor asks you out to lunch, he will not tell you what you want until the coffee. Wait until then. There are even suggestions for suitable story titles with comments: *Midsummer Madness*, *Moon Over the Pine Trees* (which would give a chance to the artist for a good layout), *Sahara Nights* ("perhaps rather overdone"), *Lady! Be Good*, *Hearts are Trumps*. So now, as a result of following the good advice she gives to many aspiring writers, Ursula Bloom is a name that we all know. Now she has an agent and, I expect, a secretary or two. She has made good, that is to say, she has made money. Her opinion of what she does and, perhaps, her opinion of herself is expressed in sentences which silence criticism and sum up her useful and shocking book. "In what other profession could I have earned over two thousand a year in just under the ten years? None at all, I should think, because I am not a clever woman." But Ursula Bloom underestimates herself: she is clever, both in describing the intricacies of a certain form of writing and in dissociating it from genius. She is describing a craft from a technical point of view. There is no nonsense about literature in her book.

Let us turn to the world of Mollie Stokes and her brother John and their friends the Fawcetts and the Lowries. It is clean and fresh, a world of tweed skirts, competitions, doing difficult holes in two under bogey, jolly scampers among the dunes at Lossiemouth and St. Enodoc, smiling captains in rambling Surrey homesteads, decent schoolgirls, and sensible, handsome schoolmistresses; a world where this is how you reckon age. "Why, she can't be forty yet, because she told me one day she wasn't born when the rubber-cored ball was invented." In this world there is plenty to live on and, if there isn't, you can always do what Margaret Lowrie did—become a golf and English mistress at your old school. And when it is wet, you can practise approach shots up the stairs and putting along the patterns of the guest house carpet. And in the evenings John reads out advice from a book on golf to his sister and mother. This is a wholesome, jolly book which made me go into the hall and take a look at my new mashie. There is a sort of plot to hold it together, a diversity of characters and a foreword by Joyce Wethered. Besides its entertainment value, *Family Golf* has great merit as a treatise on how to play better golf. I have already put its theory on putting into practice and find that it works.

Give me the world of golf and stockbroking: the smell of the locker room; the crack of a good drive bounding down the fairway; the chip of a well-judged approach. I would rather play in a County championship with Mollie Stokes than take an editor out to lunch at the Strand Palace with Ursula Bloom. In fact I think I shall go and smash the keys of my typewriter with that old niblick of mine.

JOHN BETJEMAN

NEW NOVELS

Love Went A-Riding. By RICHARD BLAKER. *Heinemann*, 7*s*. 6*d*.

Out of This Nettle. By NORAH LOFTS. *Gollancz*. 8*s*. 6*d*.

The Almond Tree. By ROBERT LIDDELL. *Jonathan Cape*. 7*s*. 6*d*.

Chosen People. By SEAFORTH MACKENZIE. *Jonathan Cape*. 7*s*. 6*d*.

According to the learned, voluminous, and now almost wholly forgotten Mosson, "the novel, at its highest, is a prose epic"; and, on another occasion, the same unimpeachable authority defined the epic as "a narrative . . . of the Hero's triumph over the Forces of Darkness." In *Love Went A-Riding* the Hero is Kenneth Cresswell (known to his friends as K.C.), an ex-officer of the Artillery, and a mild, kindly, rather incompetent gentleman of the old school, living quietly in a country town with his practical sister-in-law and his frank, coltish comrade of a daughter. So far, so bad. But the Forces of Darkness are a recurrent, overpowering and inexcusable dipsomania; and in the characteristic situations of light social comedy, Mr. Blaker has set the harshly convincing story of a squalid and terrific struggle. The strength of the novel lies in the contrast between character and theme. The quiet and efficient Kathie with her vocal contempt for "nonsense," and her secret love for her brother-in-law; long-legged, independent Jill, passionately idealising an imaginary idea of her father; bluff, wise, care-free Dr. Martin, with his love of golf and Scotch whisky; and the pathetic, conceited good-nature of K.C. himself, have been the familiar themes of a dozen slick, popular novels which are chosen by local lending libraries and selected by Book of the Month Clubs. Mr. Blaker has dignified his puppets by holding them under the shadow of an extraordinary apprehension. Damocles at home was no doubt a dull enough fellow: for the space of his anxious dinner he becomes a figure of dramatic importance. In this tale of shock, fear, suspense, disaster, and final hope of salvation, the author has remembered that the duller the setting the more dreaded and feared the unusual; and the more powerful the contrast between the wish and the reality.

The weaknesses of *Love Went A-Riding* are partly occasioned by its fidelity to its chosen attitude. The story is told with the pedestrian, half-humorous sincerity of any light novel of manners; and for describing K.C.'s temptations, and the enduring Kathie's inarticulate fears, such a style has much to commend it. But when K.C. does break into all the filth and disgust of a serious bout, Mr. Blaker has not had the courage to describe the unpleasant in honestly unpleasant terms. The raving delusions of *delirium tremens* are treated like the antics of a music-hall drunk, and instead of the pitiable frenzy of a man become temporarily mindless, we are given the amusing eccentricities which were once the mainstay of the comic papers. In his last chapters, too, the author loses his head and his sense of reality, and introduces K.C. to a beautiful and insolently unconventional woman who seduces him on the Common after a visit to the dog races. The seductress (whom I seem to remember from Mr. Blaker's earlier work) is quite unconvincing and wholly outside the narrative; her presence was probably welcome for reasons of space. *Love Went A-Riding* does not quite achieve its intention; unlike the majority of writers the author is betrayed by his high spots. But he deserves credit for that rarest of literary freaks, the popular novel with a sincere and unpopular theme.

Formally, *Out of This Nettle* is an historical novel. Lowrie, son of a Scottish gentleman ruined and crippled in the '15, is himself involved in the '45, and forced to flee from Scotland on a vessel bound for the West Indies. The ship is seized by pirates, and Lowrie taken and sold as a slave to a planter on the island of St. Crispin. Years later the island is captured by the French, and he escapes to America, where he tries to run his own plantation, but is finally ruined by blight and forced to return to his native country. Mrs. Lofts has, in fact, the most luscious pile of "colourful situations," which certain other novelists would have turned into a picturesque, accurate-in-every-detail historical romance that might have knocked the sales off *Anthony Adverse*. As it is, the book is historical only in name. There is no attempt at period realism, and it is possible to read a dozen pages taken at random without suspecting that the time is other than the present day. Even the characters think and feel in wholly modern terms, with no trace of the brutality, odd reason, and complex codes of behaviour that governed the mind of the eighteenth-century man.

The truth, I believe, is that Mrs. Lofts wished to present a parable, and chose the past to disguise its immediate application. The adventures of Lowrie are the Odyssey of a man seeking to be free to follow his own ideals. First he is driven from the bondage of his home to find, across the sea, the crueller but less immediate slavery of a great plantation. Escaping to America, he is again bound by forces beyond his control, and the blight follows his nagging mother and the overseer's whip to drive him again towards his dimly foreseen destiny. Passing briefly across the story are strange, partly symbolic characters, who teach the hero their strength and perish for their weaknesses. Some of these figures are drawn with great sensibility. The humane planter, living in his great house with his old brandy and domineering daughter, is an oddly attractive figure that stands out with the vividness of a flashlight photograph. Three women pass through Lowrie's life; a negress on the plantation (? the body); a ministering nun, who is murdered before she can go away with him (? the spirit); and a strange, violent woman with a dozen peculiar talents, who casts spells to win his love, and dismisses him when she has attained it (? ? ?).

Much of the symbolism must have escaped me; actually, I enjoyed the story for itself and paid little attention to hidden meanings. The writer has a gift for implying atmosphere, and with the minimum of description can suggest the uneasy stirring

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of slaves at night, or the vast emptiness of the American plain. At times the anachronisms become intensely annoying :

> And now I am a man that can only be floored by somebody chucking a lamp at me. If I don't know my own system by this time I oughta. If you reckon to be a friend of mine gimme a drink . . . and make no mistake, that amount of raw flesh would have been a ticket to glory for a lot of people. . . .

Out of This Nettle is an historical novel by courtesy and an adventure story by achievement. The movement is rapid, the characters vivid, and the situations strong. It is typical of the story's weakness and strength that the figure of the hero is the least well-defined in the book.

The Almond Tree is a pleasant and talented first novel, written in a technique that equally forbids deplorable failure and outstanding success. The plot is simple enough. Paul, the aging, learned, increasingly bored Headmaster of a great public school, becomes informally estranged from his wife, Mildred, and develops a part-paternal, part-senile affection for a silly young woman whom he employs as his secretary. He falls ill, his wife returns to nurse him, and he eventually dies in a scene of alarming reality. In a novel of this kind, without action or passion, the whole effect depends upon the subtlety of the characterisation; the less there is to say, the more the skill required to say it. The author circumvents this difficulty by making the protagonists speak for themselves and dividing the book into a number of sections in which Paul, Mildred, and the girl Vera record in mental diaries their thoughts, actions and surface emotions. Up to a point, Mr. Liddell succeeds admirably. Paul, with his gradually increasing fussiness, and distaste for the labour of completing the definitive edition of Augustine to which he had devoted his whole life, is a brilliant picture of the scholar overtaken by a nemesis of boredom as surely as age and hardening arteries betray those who trust in their body. His boredom with his wife and unreasoned enthusiasm for Vera are sketched delicately and precisely, without explicit satire. With his other characters, the author is not so successful. They express their intimate thoughts, but they do so as they might in a reasoned talk with a friend. Paul is a man who could well express what he felt, and feel very little that would be incapable of expression. For the others to be as fluent and revealing as a sexagenarian scholar may have been necessary for the story but is not true to character. The gushing and self-centred Vera, with her Balham-ballet culture and determined self-righteousness is for moments a delightful example of her pervasive and horrible type. But the distinguishing characteristic of the kind is a total incapacity ever to be as objective as Mr. Liddell's technique demanded. By taking out each of his characters and isolating them in their air-tight boxes, the author has cut himself off from the outside view that makes literature so superior to the drama. *The Almond Tree* is eminently readable for the polish of its style and the pleasantness of its ideas, but only Paul's section has that floodlight on reality that is the mark of good fiction. Mr. Liddell has chosen a difficult theme, and then taken the coward's way out. He may have avoided the unknown grave of the over-ambitious, but he has also side-stepped the triumphal laurels.

Chosen People is that bane of reviewers and publisher's readers, the bad-good novel. The theme is sincere, the treatment sensitive if conventional, but the writer is so intoxicated by style that he slips from the colourful to the lurid. When a person is slightly drunk it is not good to describe him as "palpable and soft with the tender generosity of the vine." Mr. Mackenzie's characters never have to run after buses, never sit and think about nothing, and never want to eat sausages and mash. But much of the characterisation is subtle to an extraordinary degree.

JOHN MAIR

The Machinery of Socialist Planning. By G. D. H. COLE. *Hogarth Press.* 2s. 6d.

This little book is an admirable outline of planning within the very definite limits which Mr. Cole sets himself. He is concerned here not with planning for a completely Socialist society; but "only with so much as can reasonably be expected to be introduced by a Socialist Government (in this country), acting along parliamentary lines, within a few years of taking office." His proposals, therefore, are not a cut and dried scheme covering the whole economic and social field. He does not, for instance, discuss the details of socialisation of particular industries or services, but he lays down general guiding principles, and he stresses the essential need of co-ordination. The central planning machinery which he envisages would be equipped with an adequate research and information department and enjoy a high status. This organisation must clearly be under the control of the Cabinet and of Parliament in the last resort. But subject to that it may be constituted and may function in one or another of several ways; there are, in fact, alternatives which Mr. Cole discusses without dogmatising. Others of his proposals are familiar and will command general assent among Socialists—e.g., the creation of a National Investment Board and the socialisation of the Bank of England. (Mr. Cole himself would also socialise the joint stock banks at once; but he admits the possibility of their being, temporarily at least, controlled through the Bank of England.) It is clear, too, as he shows, that a partial control over prices as well as over the distribution of incomes will be inevitable. In his final chapter Mr. Cole rebuts the charge that all this means a monstrous extension of bureaucracy. What a planned Socialist economy involves is not "more administrators and more machinery, but more public servants and fewer employers and directors of capitalistic businesses—more public bodies and fewer private profit-making concerns."

Here I Lie. By ALEX. THOMPSON. *Routledge.* 15s.

Mr. Thompson, friend of Blatchford, Morris and Hyndman and their collaborator in the early Socialist movement, has a very curious attitude to Socialism which is best illustrated by the fact that he admired Lord Northcliffe as much as any of them. It is Socialism of the old British brand. Blatchford, a most enthusiastic patriot in the War to End War; Hyndman, with his £160,000 and inseparable silk hat; Morris, arty and Utopian, seem rather good middle-class Englishmen driven by religious and social idealism, than true Socialists. The reader who is annoyed by this or unwilling to admit it will probably not enjoy the book. Mr. Thompson has certainly mixed in most of the progressive circles of the last forty years. An experienced journalist, although he may sometimes degenerate into the merely facetious, he never degenerates into the irrelevant or boring.

About Motoring

MOTORWAYS . . . OR NOT?

IN the middle of summer a car capable of 75 m.p.h. will probably require about three hours to complete the journey between London and Brighton on Sundays, a distance of no more than 53 miles. This speed will be registered in both directions if the journey is made downwards in the morning and upwards in the evening. Similar congestion rules on a great many British roads, and illustrates how the Government has shelved the problem of road transport, together with the penalty which the nation is paying for the diversion of the Road Board millions to other expenditures. The deceleration of pleasure traffic is, perhaps, no great matter, though it is desirable that on the one full weekly holiday both the motorist and the cyclist should be able to relax; and nowadays almost any ride or drive out of our big cities at week-ends bears some resemblance to purgatory. Such ordeals would not be accepted by either motorist or cyclist if any congenial alternative were available. The driver and pedaller are probably none the better for their outing—it is a real strain to concentrate to a limit of a few feet for six hours with death or injury as the penalty for a moment's carelessness. Passengers in cars may divert the tedium by observing the personal peculiarities of their neighbours in the queue, or the mechanical features of the vehicles which press against them; but the driver's lot is far more arduous than occupation of the cab of the Flying Scot. If all this is regarded as negligible, let us ask what will happen if and when the large-scale evacuation of population is attempted during or on the brink of the first series of gigantic air raids in a war. The derangement of communications is best effected by destroying key bridges and railway junctions. This is the bombers' ideal. But when the defence are endeavouring to shift millions of people in a very few days, the absolute ideal need not be attained. No very brilliant technique is required to fly for half a mile along the straight line of any specified road or railway and plunk four large, high-explosive bombs on it at intervals of a couple of hundred yards. That particular artery, even if it were deserted at the time, would be put out of action for long enough, as the two central craters would probably be inaccessible for repair until the two end craters had been filled. If the roads were jammed with assorted traffic, the scenes would resemble a gorge which made our own airmen sick during Liman von Sanders' retreat before Allenby in Palestine. If and when war comes, our road communications will become as vital as our rail communications; and they are already proved grotesquely inadequate for local pleasure services in peace time.

The third argument for a radical and immediate expansion of road development is the familiar safety factor. If accidents are classified in terms of locality, by far the largest percentage occur on straight roads (mainly through up and down traffic being accommodated on the same lane), and the next largest at junctions (largely because these junctions are uncontrolled and unpro-

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tected). The motorway confines all traffic to a unidirectional lane or lanes, and protects or controls all junctions. The motorway, combined with one or more concentric ring roads encircling large centres of population, relieves towns and cities of through traffic, minimises urban congestion, and accelerates long-distance traffic, with consequent benefits to commerce. The construction of new motorways is cheaper and more rapid than the adaptation of ancient routes. Their lines can be drawn across cheap agricultural land, and may avoid vested interests; but whenever an old road is widened, costly land is invaded, buildings must be felled here and there, compensation must be made for expropriated interests. The opponent of motorways imagines that the demand for them is confined to high-speed motorists who wish to travel at 100 m.p.h., no man impeding them. Such innocents should make a trial trip on the autostradas of Italy or the autobahns of Germany. He would find them so excessively tedious that no man frequents them except under compulsion. Both private and professional drivers unwillingly use them when it is necessary to make a long journey as rapidly as possible. Nobody uses them for enjoyment, any more than Britons take a third-class railway ticket from London to Edinburgh out of pure fun. The sensations of both journeys are similar; and the train has the advantage, because in the train one can read or feed or talk at ease. Let any doubting Thomas inspect any of the great roads out of London or Birmingham or Manchester on a summer Sunday, and picture the scene if a single enemy bomber contrived to evade defending squadrons and get on the line of that road for only half an hour. If the motorways were merely a measure of precaution against war, they would be amply justified; but as even in peace time they would produce a definite economy of human life and form a definite asset to that transport system upon which all commerce depends, it is amazing that such lethargy prevails. It may be argued that motorways cannot be constructed swiftly enough to reduce the menace of a possible war; and that if constructed, they would be just as vulnerable as any other road. Germany uses special machines for paving her autobahns, which lay concrete almost like carpets, when once the route is traced, levelled, and furnished with its foundations. A motorway is never as vulnerable to bombing as an ordinary road, because it is at least twice as wide; no single bomb is likely to put its full width out of commission at any given point, and the "up" half could, of course, be switched over to "down" traffic at brief notice. In any evacuation scheme both "up" and "down" lanes could be employed for "down" usage, the returning empties coming "up" for fresh loads by the old roads; and the carrying capacity of the double motorway with its high speed capacity would be simply enormous under such a system. Moreover, the precautionary motorways would probably all run through a sector bounded by lines struck between W. and N.W. of London; and these motorways would enjoy tolerable protection, because any formations dispatched to bomb them would have to fly round, through or over the whole of the London defences; and if the weather conditions, especially at night, made it possible for these bombers to find the motorways west of London at all, it should be equally possible for fighters to harry them so that their chances of inflicting serious damage on huge motorways would not be great. By contrast, the railways and the existing road exits could be seriously deranged by bombing in London itself or in any other great city. The radial motorways, striking between west and north of London, would presumably be coupled by concentric ring roads, so that if a short section of a motorway close to London were blocked, the block could be circumvented at the cost of reducing the traffic stream.

It is not suggested that such motorways should be constructed solely with an eye to national defence. The arguments in their favour would remain adequate if we were assured a hundred years of peace. War merely adds a special factor of urgency.

R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 438

Set by Roger Marvell

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best description of Bank Holiday at Brighton supposedly written by the Goncourts, Pater, Wilde, Proust, Firbank, E. M. Forster or William These Names Make News Hickey. Entries not to exceed 250 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, August 5th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 436

Set by John Mair

To show the Duce that England is not effete, Mr. Chamberlain resolves to make his Cabinet and the leaders of the Opposition take part in martial sports similar to those recently performed by their Italian counterparts. The sports, of course, are typically British, and include such events as Walking the Compromise, and A.R.P. (played with real buckets and real incendiary bombs). The usual prizes are offered for the best eye-witness accounts (in not more than 250 words) from the point of view of either the *Times* or the *Daily Worker*, of the events together with the performances of the leading competitors.

Report by John Mair

Very few of the competitors seem to have read the Competition; less than 10 per cent. noticed that *eye-witness* accounts were suggested, rather than lists of events or comments on the competitors. The Privilege case has clearly been obsessing NEW STATESMAN readers; ropes of Sandys, Sandys of time, Sandys of the desert (compared to Lawrence) all made an unwelcome appearance. There was a common tendency to make Mr. Chamberlain put the weight (leaving no stone unturned) and explore avenues, and only two competitors thought of broadening precedents. The best adaptation from an old game came from Pillicock with his "Hop, skip and right about face," and the best new game was Doing things with Bayonets. One competitor has the idea that the *Times* might commission the King's medallist to write a descriptive ode:

Rise up my Neville, my soft, soapy serpent,
Out of your Cabinet into the air
Stop broadening precedence into disaster
And riding an earthquake to help split a hair.

and, very felicitously, "Nor the strict beauty of trains with as many points as a setter." But, unfortunately, A. E. K. had to be ruled out of order. A. V. Thompson might have won had it not been for his puns; to be told that in walking the compromise Mr. Chamberlain "kept his perch without difficulty and gained first plaice" was the surest way to prejudice this judge. After some hesitation I give the first prize to G. L. Arthurs for his apt quotations in the best *Times* style, in spite of his extreme verbosity. L. W. Bailey might have won on the strength of his last paragraph, but he left two or three stones unturned.

FIRST PRIZE

ATHLETIC DEMOCRACY

The Democratic Sports held yesterday beneath the solemn shadow of Stonehenge should prove to the satisfaction even of the Continental Caesars that there is still "no change" to be got from the Nation of Shopkeepers. Happily symbolic was the personal triumph of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN in the majority of the events. Some, it is true, who would demand rigid equality to check the proper triumph of natural talent, complained of favouritism, and allege that in Broadening Down the Precedent, the Premier received a broader and more flexible Precedent than that allotted to his opponent, Mr. GALLACHER. To these carping critics we say, in the words of CARLYLE: "the strong daring man, therefore, has set all manner of formulas and superficialities against him; has dared appeal to the genuine fact of This England." Others again urge a more rigid and inflexible mode, and cite Mr. HORE-BELISHA'S slip from the Bench whilst attempting to Walk the Compromise, as proof that a firmer Bench should have been provided for the Ministers; a Bench as implacably secure as that of their fellows in the Reichstag. But true Democracy abstains from such a measure, and though it may be said with BLAKE that "Abstinence sows SANDYS in ruddy limbs and flaming hair," yet, to adapt the Parable, "a House built on SANDYS can never burn."

Of the events themselves, much has already been written. In Spanish Consequences, in which the competitors had to write a Note to FRANCO and then guess what would be the consequence, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN scored an easy success by leaving his paper blank. In Doing Things with Bayonets, the High Commissioner for Palestine was disqualified for attempting to sit on them; and Lord NUFFIELD gained a popular victory by beating them into Preference Shares. A.R.P. had, unfortunately, to be abandoned, since the Buckets and Shovels were still under contract in Uruguay, and the Incendiary Bombs proved to be of a Boer War coal-burning model. . . .

G. L. ARTHURS

KINGSLEY HOTEL.
NEAR the British Museum, Bloomsbury Way (formerly Hart Street), W.C.1. Telephones in all Bedrooms. Numerous private bathrooms. Bedroom, Bath and Breakfast from 9s. 6d. per night. Illustrated Booklet and inclusive Terms on application.

WARWICK CLUB, Ltd., 21 St. George's Square, S.W.1. Room and Breakfast, 5s. a night or 30s. weekly: with dinner 6s. 6d. a night or 35s. to 2 *gns.* weekly. Vic. 7289.

REFORMED INNS.—Ask for descriptive list (3d. post free) of 180 INNS AND HOTELS managed by THE PEOPLE'S REFRESHMENT HOUSE ASSOCIATION, LTD., P.R.H.A., LTD., St. George's House, 193 Regent Street, London, W.1.

TORQUAY. Howden Court. 3 minutes by private path to sea. Sun Lounge. Private bath and sitting-rooms, meals served in latter or in dining-room as desired (no extra charge), also Service Flat in hotel. Ideal for people on leave. A.A. appointed. Tel. 280711.

SALISBURY
THE OLD MILL RESTAURANT AND HOTEL at West Harnham.
Large Countrified Bedrooms, and specially good new bathrooms.
Candle-lit 13th Century Refectory for Meals.
Riding School and good horses for hacking.
Terms from 3½ *gns.* a week.
Apply PROPRIETOR.

FOLKESTONE
Come to Lymbrook, 22 Castle Hill Avenue, bijou hotel. Catering and comfort are specialities. From 3 *gns.* Write MISS JAMES.

OXFORD. The Castle Hotel. Small, but really good. Comfortable beds. Excellent food. Moderate terms for bed and breakfast. A week-end or longer residence. Tel.: 2844.

ROSS-ON-WYE. Quiet, bracing, sunny situation. Excellent cuisine, separate tables. Vi-spring mattresses. Central for all parts Wye Valley. MISS MATTHEWS, Galen Lodge.

IRELAND. A few select guests taken in country mansion, delightful surroundings. Mountain scenery. Brochure on application. Ballintaggart, Colbinstown, Co. Kildare.

BUSTON MANOR, HUNTON ('phone 85174), Nr. Maidstone, Kent, for agreeable holidays among orchards and hop gardens. Tennis, swimming. Week from 40s., week-end 10s.

ASHDOWN FOREST. TYES, Nutley, Sussex. Country House in 6 acres; 600 ft. up, lovely views; modern comforts; attractive meals and service you will appreciate. From 3 *gns.* weekly. Nutley 85.

ISLE OF WIGHT, Country House, h. & c. running water, indoor sanitation, elec. l., C.H., 23 acres to sea, *5 for nudism*, safe bathing, showers, tennis. Brochure, N. S. CRITCHARD, Woodside House, Wootton, I.W.

DARTMOUTH, South Devon. Warfleet Creek Hotel. French management. French cooking. Comfortable. Tel. 144.

WEST OF IRELAND. Strand Hotel, Dugort, Achill Isle, Co. Mayo. Beautifully situated on finest bathing strand in Ireland. Magnificent scenery. Ideal centre for exploring Island. Fully licensed; excellent cuisine. Hot and cold water. Good sea. White and Brown trout fishing. Terms moderate. Under new management. TOM SHERIDAN, Proprietor.

ENGLISH LAKES. Those who enjoy unostentatious comfort, good taste and good fare in charming and restful surroundings, should visit The Pillar Hotel (unlicensed) opened in early July at Langdale Estate, Great Langdale, near Ambleside. Write for booklet (N.).

SALTDEAN, Brighton. GLENDOWER, first-class guest house. Tel.: Rottingdean 9552.

RYE, Sussex. Old Hope Anchor Hotel. Sunny, comfortable. Quiet situation. Lovely views. Cent. heating. H. and c. water all bedrooms. A.A. 'Phone 126.

N. DEVON. The Crescent, Mortehoe, Woolacombe. Situated in quaint old-world village, near sea and moorland. Excellent cooking. H. and c. water; all modern conveniences. 2–4 *gns.* weekly. MRS. M. YEO.

ON SUSSEX DOWNS, to let furnished modern detached Cottage, sleep 5; garage. Lovely views, sea 7 mins. Riding, swimming, tennis. 42 Sellons Avenue, London, N.W.10.

SEAFORD. New Vegetarian Guest House. Sea view, h. & c. water in rooms. Own garden produce, MISS E. MITCHELL, Claremont House, Claremont Road.

WENSLEYDALE Guest house for energetic or restful holidays. Good centre walks or motoring. Easy access main routes Glasgow. Postal address: Warnford, Thoralby, Leyburn, Yorks.

WEST SUSSEX VILLAGE. Quiet country holiday, near Downs and sea. Home-made fare. 42s. SIMONS, Devon Cottage, Westbourne, near Emsworths, Hants.

SUSSEX, Wood's Mill, Henfield. 'Phone: 93. Charming house, grounds, cuisine, comfort, fishing, riding, car.

DELIGHTFUL holidays, week-ends, Sussex cottage, Veg. cooking. HILL, 65 High St., Three Bridges.

PARK HOUSE, Black Notley, Braintree, Essex. 16th Cen. Guest-House. Quiet, informal, 6s. per day.

BRIGHTON, 18 Chesham Place. Modern furnished service rooms, minute sea. Meals optional.

Holiday Suggestions

SOMERSET, Mendip country, Anglo-French family take guests, 17th-cent. farmhouse, modernised, good food, comfort, books. Wyndhams, Shepton Mallet 57.

WEST HIGHLANDS. Small, quiet, comfortable hotel, beautifully situated on the shore of Loch Linnhe. Full particulars from MISS M. VELLACOTT, Onich Hotel, Onich, Fort William, Inverness-shire.

PEACEFUL DORSET. Small but charming XIVth Century Guest-house; electric light, bath, telephone, excellent cooking, home-made bread. The Pitch Market, Cerne Abbas.

FACING beautiful South Downs; a few guests received; all home comforts; lovely garden; own produce; excellent cooking. Car, garage, tennis, riding. Easy reach golf, swimming pool. Highly recommended, 2½ *gns.* "The CHASE," Albourne, Sussex. Tel.: Hurstpierpoint 165.

NEW FOREST. The Guest House, Godshill, Fordingbridge, Hants. Lovely country. Tennis, riding, river bathing. Apply MR. LENNARD. Tel. No.: 2168.

ASHDOWN FOREST. Charming HOME for guests. 14 bedrooms, private bathrooms, good English cooking, home poultry and vegetables, central heating. 7 acres of beautiful garden with tennis, etc. Garage. THE CLOCK HOUSE, NUTLEY, SUSSEX. 'Phone: NUTLEY 96.

KENT. Restful accommodation. Old-world village. Main services, constant hot water, efficient catering. Garage. 'Phone: 252. MRS. MILLS, Cottage Farm, Smarden.

ISLE OF WIGHT. Beautifully situated own grounds overlooking sea and Downs. Golf adjacent. Excellent cooking. Garage. YOUNG, Stonehenge, Chale.

SUMMER holidays on horseback (August), New Forest and South Downs; 27s. 6d. per day inclusive. Write: 30 William Mews, Knightsbridge, S.W.1.

GLORIOUS COTSWOLDS. Langston Arms Hotel, Kingham. Convenient centre for rail or road. Modernised throughout. Excellent cuisine. Terms from 2½ *gns.*

FITTLEWORTH, Sussex. Fortrie Guest House. Real Country. Comfort, good beds and cooking. Breakfast in bed if desired. 'Phone 61.

SURREY (glorious country near Leith Hill, Friday Street). Peace, Comfort. Excellent Cooking. 9/6 Day. Pinehurst Hotel, Tillingbourne Valley, Wotton, nr. Dorking. 'Phone: ABINGER 39.

FISHPONDS, South Stoke, near Goring-on-Thames. Small exclusive Guest House. Tennis, swimming, punting. 'Phone: GOR. 150.

ACHILL ISLAND. Slievemore Hotel. Largest and oldest established. Close to sea. A.A. and R.I.A.C. appointments. Apply HOPE CLAPHAM.

BEXHILL. Board-residence, £2 2s. weekly. Near sea. Children reduced. 41 Jameson Road.

FOWEY, Cornwall. St. Fimbarrus Private Hotel. Excellent cuisine; individual attention, magnificent situation overlooking England's loveliest natural harbour. Open all year. Winter residence for convalescents and others. Tel. 170.

FOLKESTONE. Visit "Normandene," Westbourne Gardens. Highly recommended for catering, service and comfort. Terms Board Residence from 2½ *gns.* Write MRS. NEEDLEY. 'Phone: 209511.

BENBECULA, Ditchling, Sussex. Small guest house. Delightful position facing Downs. H. & c. all rooms. Moderate terms. Telephone: Hassocks 146.

LAKE DISTRICT, near Buttermere. Board-residence. Tariff: BLAYLOCK, "The Grange," Loweswater, Cockermouth.

MOP END FARM, near Amersham. Accommodation for paying guests. Heart of Chiltern country. Use of car if desired. A. D. BRUCE. Holmer Green 78.

VACANCIES now at Ranmore Lodge, Dorking, Surrey. Glorious position. 2½ *gns.* week. Telephone: Westcott 163.

1,000 Left Book Club members have enjoyed holidays at "Netherwood," The Ridge, Hastings. 5 acres lovely garden. 40 good rooms. Modern comfort. Tennis. Dancing. Illus. Brochure. 'Phone: Baldslow 19.

FURNISHED CARAVAN. Quite private and exceptionally beautiful position on Dorset Farm, 2 miles from sea at Burton Bradstock. Comfortable box-spring berths for four. One guinea weekly each person. THORBURN, Bonscombe Farm, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset.

CORNWALL, PENZANCE. Guest-house, close sea. From 37s. 6d. Bank Holiday week-end, 22s. 6d. "Westbourne," Alexandra Road.

COTTAGE, Welsh Mountains, near L. Ogwen, for September; 5 b., 2 s.r. 3 *gns.* weekly. Climbing, bathing. Write: HUBBACK, 19 Wellgarth Road, London, N.W.11.

RIVIERA. HOTEL DE LA MER, Cap Martin. Facing full south in own grounds direct on Sea. Buses to Menton and Monte Carlo. Pension 7s. inclusive.

FIONNAY, SWITZERLAND. 5,000 feet alt. Central Alps; reached by Autoposte from Sembrancher Station, half-hour beyond Martigny. Superb walks and flora; base for eleven climbs over 10,000 feet. HOTEL CARRON. 7s. 6d. full pension.

PARIS Vme. HOTEL D'ALGER. 8 rue des Fosses, St. Jacques. Central, heart of Latin Quarter. Good rooms from 15 *frs.* daily. Special monthly terms.

NEAR DIEPPE. GRAND HOTEL, BERNEVAL-S.-MER. Picturesque country, good bathing and sands. Tennis in own garden. Food specially good. Pension 45–55 *frs.* Personal recommendation.

HOTEL ALPENRUHE GRINDELWALD. English-woman—there for second year—recommends everyone wanting perfect holiday (in every respect) to come too.

BELGIAN coastal village, 10 minutes from Ostend by electric tram. Beautifully appointed hotel. H. & c. Free bathing. Golf, tennis. English visitors specially catered for. Terms: 7s. 6d. to 10s. inclusive daily. First-class cuisine and personal recommendation. Hotel d'Esperance, Breedene-Plage. Write for illustrated brochure.

ACCOMMODATION
To Let and Wanted

LUXURIOUS SUITES, FLATS, FLATLETS, etc., in both town and country. Personallly inspected and recommended. Free advice given. ANNE PAGE, Dorland House, 14 Lower Regent Street. WHI. 3258.

SWISS COTTAGE. Really comfortable divan rooms, simply furnished and sanely decorated. Partial board from 35s. PRI. 6466.

A BACK WITH A VIEW. Over lovely gardens. Tennis. 15 minutes Piccadilly. From 25s., bed-b'fast; 37s. 6d. part board. Also FLATLETS (unfurn.). Alcove basins. Kitchenettes, private baths from 18s. 6d. 11 Clifton Gardens, W.9. ABErcorn 3035.

HOLLAND PARK. Modern rooms with breakfast, 25s. Constant hot water. Quiet house. 1 min. Central London Tube. 19 Clarendon Road. Park 7016.

HYDE PARK, 41 Cambridge Terrace, W.2. Ambassador 2941. H. and c. basins. 5s. 6d. nightly with breakfast, from 22s. 6d. weekly.

EXCEPTIONALLY good Divan rooms, newly decorated, furnished, H. & C. Dining-room, garden. Close Tube, buses. Including breakfast, dinner, baths, from 2 *gns.* 80 Maida Vale, W.9. Mai. 1930.

BEAUTIFULLY appointed service rooms with baths and breakfast from 5s. 6d. per night. Double from 50s. per week. 29 West Cromwell Road, S.W.5. Flax. 1181.

CHELSEA. Comfortable divan bed-sitting rooms from 27s. 6d. weekly, including breakfast, light and service. 36 Oakley Street, S.W.3. Flax 0276.

HYDE PARK. Well-furnished room in central-heated residence for business or professional man. Exceptionally quiet. 11a Hyde Park Mansions. Pad. 6878 (before noon and after 6 p.m.).

HAMPSTEAD. Pleasant divan rooms. Gas fire, ring. Geyser. Use garden. Meals optional. Maida Vale 5639.

REDUCED fees summer months small club off Queen's Gate. Excellent cuisine and service 35s. a week, breakfast, dinner and full week-end board. Kensington 3994.

WANTED for one year. Large studio, room, hall suitable for educational dance training. Box 2380

18/- to quiet tenant: large, light room, breakfast, etc., Richmond Park, River, Station 7 mins. Waterloo 14. Write WALSH, 35 Water Lane, E.C.4.

HOUSES, FLATS, PROPERTY, etc.
For Sale, To Let and Wanted

HOUSEBOAT "Chouette," Hampton-on-Thames, for sale, 3 reception, 4 bed, kitchen and bathroom. Mainland mooring, telephone, gas, electric light, constant hot water, large garden, absolute quiet, a perfect home all the year round. 'Phone Molesey 389.

SIMPLY furn. Chiltern cottage, easy access London, offered altern. week-ends and whole August. Box 2511.

PENN. Pleasant modern cottage, roomy, all conveniences, view, to let three weeks late August. Apply Hampdens, Penn.

W.C.1. Furnished flat, s.c., 3 rms., b. and k. 2 *gns.* 3 months or longer. Terminus 5046.

FURNISHED Flat to let, Hampstead. Living room, bedroom (2 beds), kit. with bath. Top floor. 2½ *gns.* p.w. August. Box 2519.

W.C.1. Flat to let. Large living room, 2 bedrooms, kitchen. 35s. per week (including electric light), 4 Ampton Street, W.C.1. Ter. 6761.

KENSINGTON. Unfurnished flat, hall-lounge, one rec., 2 bed., kit., bath. Rent £85 p.a. 'Phone: WES. 1538.

BLOOMSBURY. Studio-flat, for two or one, 2 rooms, into green, bath-kitchen; 'phone. Simply furnished. Use Square-garden. From 35s. weekly. To let August 1st, about 3 months. Hol. 2557 (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.).

KENSINGTON. Excellent Studio-Flat, furnished, to let August 13th to Sept. 15th. Use of beautiful Square-garden. Western 2425.

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS

Special cheap rates are available for "Holiday Suggestions" advertisements on this page—on application. Other rates and full particulars regarding Classified Advertisements will be found on p. 197.

SECOND PRIZE

CHAUVINISM IN THE PARK

By BEN BOLT (*Daily Worker* Correspondent)

The "National" Government's efforts at fascisation of leisure were checked last Sunday when the workers refused to rally to Hyde Park to witness the grotesque antics of Chamberlain and his gang.

The sight of Neville, stripped to his puny waist, trying to lift massive boulders in the Leaving No Stone Unturned event drew jeers from the few people present. For Exploring Every Avenue a colossal maze was erected at the expense of the unemployed, in which Ministers wandered aimlessly for hours. As Willy Gallacher remarked to me, it was just like their efforts in debate.

Then there was Cabinet Re-Shuffle, a form of musical chairs, refereed by Lady Astor; Walking the Greasy Compromise, won by Chamberlain; Balancing the Budget; and Official Secrets, in which M.P.s were given quantities of dirty linen to wash with soft soap. Non-Intervention consisted of a fencing match between Mander and Butler, during which Ministers had to look the other way, those turning round being disqualified.

The final event was an A.R.P. relay race. Teams had to collect incendiary bombs on shovels and drop them into buckets filled with sand. None exploded, but it was discovered they were all filled with sawdust, and Chamberlain said "Eeny Meeny" to discover who was responsible.

What a contrast to the clean, glistening bodies of the jolly democrats at the Left Book Sports Rally. Down with this Government of Fascist Gangsters! ALL OUT NEXT SUNDAY. L. W. BAILEY

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 291.—CALIBAN SQUARED

By Arithmedicus.

Recently, I was working out my success over a consecutive series of Caliban's Problems, when my inquisitive nephew, George, came into the room: of course, he wanted to know what I was doing So I explained that I was grouping the results into four groups. (1) Those I had solved correctly ("the largest group, I am glad to say" I told George). (2) Those I had solved correctly, failing, however, to send in the solution in time. (3) Those I had solved, as I thought, but over which I had been wrong, and (4) Those which I had failed altogether to solve.

"There are some funny things about the numbers in those groups—no two of which are the same—" I went on: "Listen, George, here's a problem. The sum of the smallest group taken with each of the others in turn, is a perfect square: moreover, the total of the series is one less than a perfect square. Take the square roots of these four perfect squares: the sum of the two smallest roots, the sum of the three smallest, the sum of the four, and the smallest root itself, each of these four sums is also a perfect square: and their square roots are in arithmetical progression.

"*Now, what percentage of the whole series does my group (1) of correct solutions form?*"

PROBLEM 289.—FABRICS FROM JUGGINPORE

This is, I think, an easy problem. We have to find the series

$$a+b+c+d+e+f$$

where $b=2a$, $c=2b$, etc.;
a, b, c, d, e, f each equals m^2+n^2;
and neither m nor n exceeds 14.

The only possible series is:

$$1^2+2^2 = 5$$
$$1^2+3^2 = 10$$
$$2^2+4^2 = 20$$
$$2^2+6^2 = 40$$
$$4^2+8^2 = 80$$
$$4^2+12^2 = 160$$

Hence Tomkins' collection includes seven different sizes of fabrics.

PROBLEM 288.—STRULDBRUGS

A set of Low's cartoons goes to P. D. Guillebaud, Corsica Hall, Seaford College, Seaford. *Ten* points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

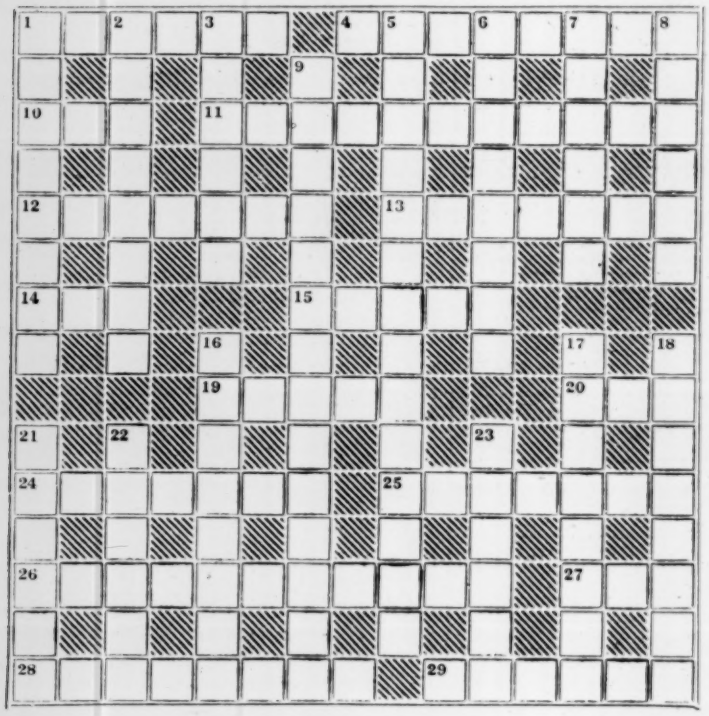
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 438

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Douglas Hawson, The Mount, Rillington, Malton, Yorks

ACROSS

1. Noel perhaps, but not Christmas. (6)
4. Given whisky that wasn't Irish? (8)
10 Racing place on the sand. (3)
11. Wooden understanding. (11)
12. Sam Browne carried this case. (7)
13. A fearful fancy for creatures great and small. (7)
14. Two will foolishly conclude so. (3)
15. A change for Astor. (5)
19. Doesn't vary without tea. (5)
20. Mine is excavated. (3)
24. The load is brought round. (7)
25. Trade for which craft is necessary. (7)
26. Searchers after the picturesque? (11)
27. A down train starts from this. (3)
28. In which it can be shown that Reg is terribly bad. (8)
29. There would of course be no body to this drink. (6)

DOWN

1. Owing to its temperature it is less easily lost in emergency. (8)
2. One of the sculptures on the Underground building perhaps. (8)
3. Argumentative way to call someone a liar. (6)
5. Often constitute dressin' cases. (14)
6. Pansies are for them. (8)
7. "You may as well do anything most hard,
   As seek to soften that—than which what's—?
   —His Jewish heart." (6)
8. Its ships are not seaworthy. (6)
9. A log cabin for instance. (14)
16. How the removal men work? (8)
17. What foreigners call a draught. (8)
18. Signal to "cease fog horn"? (8)
21. See the lever? It's cute. (6)
22. Totally unlike the curate's no doubt. (6)
23. Describes Regimental Officers at the moment of drinking the King's health. (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

J	U	D	A	S	■	A	P	P	L	E	T	R	E	E
A	■	R	■	O	■	M	■	L	■	A	■	I	■	V
P	R	I	M	U	L	A	■	A	R	R	A	N	G	E
A	■	E	■	G	■	R	■	N	■	N	■	G	■	N
N	O	R	T	H	E	A	S	T	■	I	R	A	Q	I
E	■	■	■	E	■	N	■	E	■	N	■	R	■	N
S	R	E	D	D	E	T	■	D	I	G	G	I	N	G
E	■	A	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	N	■	P
A	I	R	L	E	S	S	■	L	O	U	N	G	E	R
N	■	T	■	T	■	A	■	E	■	S	■	■	■	I
E	P	H	A	H	■	D	I	A	P	H	R	A	G	M
M	■	E	■	I	■	T	■	D	■	A	■	R	■	R
O	L	D	S	C	A	R	■	E	S	P	A	R	T	O
N	■	U	■	A	■	E	■	R	■	E	■	O	■	S
E	S	P	A	L	I	E	R	S	■	D	O	W	S	E

ALL ADVERTISEMENTS are accepted subject to the management's approval and right to amend or to refuse to insert any advertisement whether paid for or not.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, July 31st, at 11 a.m., MISS M. SHEEPSHANKS: "THE BETTER ASPECTS OF BRITISH AFRICAN POLICY." 7 p.m., DR. EDWARD CONZE: "F. A. VOIGT'S 'UNTO CAESAR.'"

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

CICELY C. WRIGHT, Ltd. The Advisory Bureau of the above Educational Agency gives reliable information concerning Girls' SCHOOLS of all types, Boys' Preparatory Schools, SECRETARIAL and other TRAININGS. 50 Great Russell Street, W.C.1.

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President of the Board of Governors: Gilbert Murray, Esq., D.C.L., LL.D., D.Litt., F.B.A., Emeritus Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford.
Head Mistress: Miss Baker, B.A.

MALTMAN'S GREEN, GERRARD'S CROSS. *Head Mistress:* MISS CHAMBERS, Girton College, Cambridge, late Head Mistress of the Huddersfield High School. The aim of this school is to develop the character, intellect and healthy growth of the child for the good of the community, to encourage self-expression, to increase resource and initiative by practical work. The girls will be prepared for the Universities, the Medical Profession and for advanced work in Music or Art. Fees include Elocution, Dancing, Cookery. Gerrard's Cross is 300ft. above sea-level and is on gravel soil. The house is delightfully situated in its own grounds of 15 acres.

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The Council invites applications for a full-time Lectureship and Studio Instructorship (Ungraded) in Architecture at a salary of £300 per annum, the appointment for Session 1938-39 to date from October 1, 1938.
Further details regarding the appointment, which is subject to the Federated Superannuation Scheme for Universities, may be obtained from the Registrar.
Applications, accompanied by drawings or photographs of work, two testimonials, and the names of two referees, should reach the undersigned not later than September 14, 1938.
STANLEY BUMBELL,
July, 1938. Registrar.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPETOWN.
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Applications are invited for the post of Assistant in Design in the Michaelis School of Fine Art. The assistant will be required to teach History, Theory and Practice of Design, particularly with reference to advertising and commerce generally. Salary: £400 per annum, rising by annual increments of £25 to a maximum of £500 per annum. A private studio is provided. The assistant will be expected to assume duty on 1st March, 1939.
Applications (in quadruplicate) must reach the SECRETARY, Office of the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2 (from whom further particulars may be obtained) not later than 30th August, 1938.

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Rates, and all information on page 197

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

WALL STREET AND LONDON—HOME RAILWAY EARNINGS AND THE SLUMP IN STOCKS

WALL Street has broken, but I do not expect a major reaction in this upward movement until the cash still awaiting investment has been put into the market. I need not rehearse the economic reasons for the present recovery, but the point is worth repeating that the steepness of the market rise was due to a stampede of investors out of cash into stocks. Stampede is no exaggeration because American investors move as a herd. Why they chose to move at this particular moment is difficult to explain, but no doubt it dawned upon a section of the "idle cash" investors that the chances of a further fall in the market were much less than the chances of a substantial rise. But let it not be supposed that they are yet all invested. One investment service just reports: "There are still hundreds of millions of dollars awaiting employment. Every week without a serious break in prices or an unmistakable reversal in business improvement makes for increasing restiveness of those controlling liquid funds." The professionals were no doubt waiting for the passing of the U.S. Steel preference dividend to give them the reaction on which to enter the market. The Steel directors, however, decided to pay the preferred dividend in spite of a loss of $5 millions in the second quarter, and justified their action on the grounds that since the middle of July an improvement in demand had been shown by both incoming orders and increased production. Whether all the "idle cash" investors will now re-enter the market or wait for some adverse news to cause a reaction is anybody's guess. If it had not been for the Wall Street upward pull the London markets might have suffered badly from the shock of the Courtaulds dividend and the home railway dividend cuts. In spite of bad railway news the undertone of markets as a whole remains firm, and evidence of reviving activity is shown by the big increase in new issues. Last week new issues and introductions totalled nearly £10 millions, and in the first half of this week over £5 millions. The biggest "stag" was the issue of £1,500,000 5½ per cent. preference shares of the African Explosives and Industries, Ltd., at 21*s*. Shareholders of Imperial Chemical Industries and De Beers had preferential forms and subscribed for the issue forty times over.

* * *

The half-year earnings statements of the Southern Railway and the L.N.E.R. confirmed the market's most dismal calculations. The decline in traffic receipts since March had prepared holders of Home Rails for poor results, but in the case of both lines the increase shown in operating costs was considerably in excess of anticipations. The salient figures are summarised below:

	£'000. S.R.	L.N.E.R.
Passenger Traffic Decrease	22	} 729*
Goods Traffic Decrease	61	}
Wages Increase	220	473
Other Costs Increase	236	578
Net Miscellaneous Receipts Decrease.	35	†
Total Net Revenue Decrease ..	574	1,780

* Including decline in net miscellaneous receipts.
† Not shown separately.

On the receipts side, Southern has not fared so badly, considering that last year's figures were augmented by Coronation traffic, but the fall in takings from goods is heavy in relation to the comparatively small part played by freight in the line's economy. The L.N.E.R.'s loss of gross income is much more serious. The number of passengers carried fell by 9.3 per cent., and freight tonnage by 7.3 per cent. Despite the increase in charges, receipts from passengers are 0.74 per cent. down, and those from goods 3.28 per cent. lower. After providing for debenture interest, the L.N.E.R. is paying a half-year's interest on the First and Second 4 per cent. Guaranteed Stock; but these payments, it is stated, involve a transfer from reserves, and there is no interim distribution on the Preference stocks. Southern has declared an interim of 1 per cent. on the Preferred Ordinary stock, but is distributing nothing to the Deferred shareholders. The £472,000 required to meet last year's 1½ per cent. Deferred dividend has already melted away.

* * *

In the case of the marginal stocks the earnings statements have produced a *débâcle* in an already weak market. The following table illustrates the fall during the past ten days and since this year's peak:

	"High," 1938.	July 15th.	July 26th.
Southern Pfd.	87	67½	59
„ Def.	21¾	15¾	13½
L.N.E.R. 1st Pref. ..	68½	42	31½
„ 5% Pref. ..	97	61½	53
„ 2nd Pref. ..	27½	13	11
L.M.S. 1st Pref.	82½	64½	56½
„ 1923 Pref. ..	70½	42¾	32½
„ Ord.	30½	15½	13½
G.W.R. Ord.	65½	44½	38½

Prior charges have also suffered. Southern 5 per cent. Preference stock has fallen since mid-July from 109 to 101, Great Western Preference from 111½ to 105, the two "Berwick" Guaranteed 4 per cent. stocks from 91½ and 81½ to 79 and 67 respectively, and L.M.S. 4 per cent. Guaranteed from 99 to 93.

* * *

Comment on the outlook for G.W.R. and L.M.S. stocks must await publication of their half-yearly statements, which were not available at the time of going to press. Since their gross traffic experience was similar to that of the L.N.E.R., the net figures are unlikely to be encouraging. So far as the two lines which have reported are concerned, the L.N.E.R. can scarcely be expected to fare better in the matter of gross takings during the second half of the year, whereas the S.R. should do better from seaside and cross-Channel holiday traffic. Increases in wages expenditure will fall by 75 per cent.; other costs should tend to be lower; and the lines may be able to effect economies resulting from diminished traffic. Even so, I cannot see how the year's decline in net earnings can be less than about £800,000 in the case of the S.R. (equivalent to about 3½ per cent. earned for the Preferred stock) or £3,000,000 in the case of the L.N.E.R.—a reduction which would leave something like £400,000 surplus after paying interest on the two Guaranteed stocks. To expect any distribution on L.N.E.R. Preference stocks (which seem to me still over-valued) would be excessively optimistic.

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Company Meeting

GAUMONT-BRITISH PICTURE CORPORATION

THE eleventh annual general meeting of the Gaumont-British Picture Corporation Limited was held on July 22nd, in London, W.

Mr. Isidore Ostrer (the chairman), who presided, said that the accounts showed that the profits of the Corporation were considerably higher than those for the previous year. That improvement bore out the forecast which he had made at the last meeting. He was pleased to record a new and substantial source of income from one of their associated companies, Bush Radio Limited. Gaumont-British Distributors, Limited, had experienced a satisfactory year and resumed the payment of dividends, due substantially to the arrangement made with the General Film Distributors Limited under which they received a guaranteed income.

Last year he had mentioned that following on their decision to cease film production at Shepherd's Bush they had contracted to produce, in conjunction with General Film Distributors Limited, a limited number of feature films on terms which included the provision by the latter of half the cost of production. Up to the date of the accounts a number of films had been produced and delivered to General Film Distributors Limited.

An agreement had been made with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for the production of three films. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer were sharing in the cost of production and at the same time undertaking distribution in the United Kingdom and elsewhere on terms advantageous to the company. Their American distributing company—Gaumont-British of America—would be in the unique position of distributing films in the U.S.A. for the joint account of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Gaumont-British.

The profit for the year amounted to £684,032 and the net amount to be dealt with was £633,700. After making the allocations set out in the report there remained a balance of £58,798, against £31,953 brought in. The results for the current year should be no less satisfactory and the balance sheet should be further strengthened.

They had asked the B.B.C. for permission to show television in their cinemas, other cinemas and theatres to have the same right. Gaumont-British were in a position to give public performances of television and that meant that the Baird Company and themselves were in a very favourable position to take full advantage of the development.

The report was adopted.

Company Meeting

FURNESS, WITHY & COMPANY

THE Forty-seventh Annual General Meeting of Furness, Withy and Company, Limited, was held on July 26th in London, E.C.

The Lord Essendon presided and, in the course of his speech, said: Our hopeful anticipations of a year ago were not entirely fulfilled. In the main, however, the results are satisfactory. The profit and loss account shows an increased profit for the year, viz., £620,681, compared with £544,744.

In respect of the fleets which are managed from this building the increase in operating costs, covering such items as fuel, wages, stores and insurance, compared with the level of costs a year ago, is at the rate of £275,000 per annum. These increased expenses have naturally had a serious effect upon the vessels' earnings and our fleet has actually yielded less profit than in the preceding year.

There are insidious influences at work to-day which are undermining the position of British shipping in world trade, the precise nature of which can, in many cases, only be guessed at, but which all find an explanation in the real or fancied needs of individual nations. Confidence in the future and a revival of international trade would dispel some of the fears and solve at least part of the problems. In the meantime, however, each of the three major sections of the community which are most vitally concerned, viz., shipowners, shipbuilders and the Government, will each seek to find a panacea. That the Government have the matter closely before them is evident. Our shipbuilders—who incidentally have themselves done much in recent years to reduce competition within their own ranks by eliminating a number of redundant Yards, and who are not at present able to build as cheaply as some of their foreign competitors—will do all in their power to encourage the building of new ships.

If a sufficiently large measure of international support can be found for a compensatory laying-up scheme, there should be an expressed intention that each participating nation should, as far as possible, lay-up a similar proportion of its tonnage. Some plan for adjusting tonnage is the only one that lies within the power of the industry itself.

It is to be hoped that the very strenuous efforts which are being made by our Government to establish better relationships throughout the world will meet with the success which we all believe to be possible. In my view, active and prosperous trading amongst nations is one of the surest methods of achieving peace and restoring confidence.

The report was adopted.

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Rates, and all information on page 197

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